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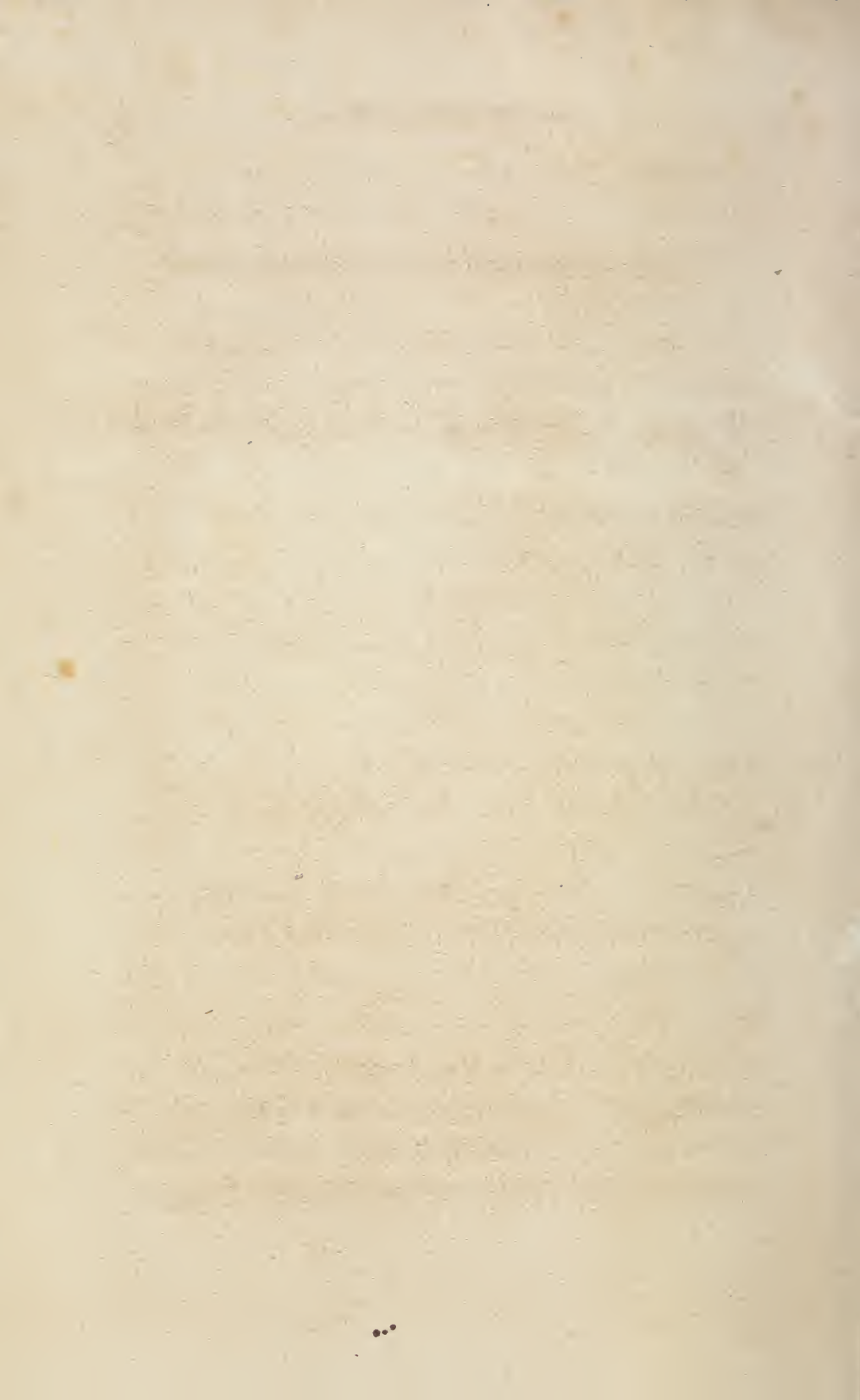
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PROOF
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OF THE

680 GENUINENESS OF THE WRITINGS

James A. Steuerman
OF
NY

THE NEW TESTAMENT:

Recd at Dep't State July 6. 1838

FOR INTELLIGENT READERS OF ALL CLASSES.

Translated from the German

OF

DR. H. OLSHAUSEN,

PROF. OF THEOL. IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ERLANGEN, ETC.

WITH NOTES,

BY DAVID FOSDICK, JR.

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P R E F A C E

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

THE author of the following treatise is known to those conversant with the theological literature of Germany, as a writer of considerable celebrity. He was born in 1796 at Oldeslohe in the Duchy of Holstein. He received his university education partly at Kiel and partly at Berlin. In 1822 he became theological professor at Königsberg, in the remotest north-eastern part of the Prussian dominions, where he remained till, in 1835, he was called to occupy the same chair at Erlangen in Bavaria. His fame has been derived mostly from his Commentaries, as being his most extensive productions. They are characterized by an almost utter absence of philological display, although they are far from being deficient in learning and shrewdness. The author prefers to exhibit results, rather than the processes by which they were attained. His mode of exposition is altogether more suited to common minds than the erudite, cumbrous mode pursued by most German commentators. To use the language of Pro-

fessor Stuart, "the course of thought, and things rather than words, are his chief object."*

The little work herewith given to the public in an English dress (published in German in 1832), is an attempt to present concisely and simply the present state of investigation concerning the genuineness of the New Testament. I do not know of a book upon the subject, in any language, which combines so popular a cast with so much comprehensiveness and justness of representation as are, in my opinion, manifested in this. The unlearned but inquisitive Christian may here find sources of reflection and conviction respecting the truth of the record on which he relies, that are not commonly accessible without the toil of severe study.

There will, of course, be found in the work a tone somewhat alien from our American views and feelings. Reference is had to religious circumstances differing in some important respects from our own. This peculiarity of tone, however, does not, in my opinion, involve any thing of a clearly mischievous tendency. Its influence will, I think, be useful. It is well to enlarge our minds through an acquaintance with the sentiments entertained concerning religious things by men as fully imbued with the spirit of piety as ourselves,

* Biblical Repository, Vol. III. p. 151. See also p. 161.

who have been nurtured in circumstances quite different from those by which we have been affected. By comparison and inference, in such a case, we may be much benefited.

I would not be understood as assenting, without restriction, to all the views which this little work presents. They may be right, or they may be wrong. I feel content to launch them before the American public, knowing that if right they will swim, and if wrong they will eventually sink. Of this, however, I am fully convinced, (as may be judged from the present version,) that the book is in the main a good one ; and I believe the public will endorse my opinion.

In proceeding with the business of translation I have been guided by the sense rather than the letter. The grammatical construction of the original has been altered whenever it was thought advisable to alter it for the sake of rendering the sense more perspicuous and natural in English. I have in one or two instances ventured to qualify an expression which seemed to me too strong, but never in any case where the change was of much importance. For instance, I have altered *inconceivable* to *hardly conceivable*, etc. I have also, in a few cases, given biblical references in addition to those furnished by the author. Many of the figures in the

original references were (typographically or otherwise) erroneous, and have been corrected. Biblical quotations are presented in conformity with our received English version, instead of being translated from the German.

The notes which I have subjoined are all designated by the letters **Tr.**

D. F. JR.

Boston, March 12, 1838.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

SEVEN years ago, when I published my history of the Gospels, it was my earnest desire to show the genuineness of all the books of the New Testament, in a small work, designed for intelligent readers generally. But, urgent as the necessity of such a work appeared to me even then, the execution of my plan has been postponed to the present time ; partly because I was hindered from entering upon it by multiplied avocations, and partly because I hoped some one would present himself who was more capable of such an undertaking than I felt myself to be. For I knew, but too well, how difficult it would be for me to write simply and plainly, so as to become even intelligible to those who are not conversant with investigations of such a description as must be noticed in this work. As, however, no one has yet appeared, to present such a work to the church of Christ, and the necessity of it has meanwhile much increased, nothing remained for me but to surmount my scruples, and execute the work as well as the Lord might permit.

The necessity of such a work will have been evident to every one who has observed how certain posi-

tions as to the pretended spuriousness, or at least suspicious character, of the writings of the New Testament, (positions which were formerly current only within the circle of the clergy,) are now entertained among the common laity. It is easy to imagine the injury which is effected by such foolish opinions. To the audacious opponents of divine truth they afford a fine occasion for repelling every attempt to win their assent to it; and well-meaning persons often find in them occasion of doubts and anxiety, which they might be spared did they only at least receive the antidote at the same time with the poison. Such an antidote, to obviate, or at least lessen, the destructive consequences of the views of many theologians in regard to the biblical books, (views which are diffused abroad sometimes indiscreetly and sometimes with a bad intention,) I wish this little work to be considered.

It will, at the same time, be my endeavor to correct the views of many not very clear-sighted though well-meaning persons, who appear to think that all critical investigations of the genuineness or spuriousness of the books of the Bible are, as such, wrong, and take their origin from unbelief. This idea is fundamentally erroneous, and not seldom arises from a religious conceit, to which there is a special liability on the part of persons who, conscious of their own internal religious life, dispense with all enlarged views of the connection of theology with the whole church of God on earth, and nevertheless are tempted to judge of things beyond the

pale of their capacity. It would have been better, therefore, had all such investigations been confined within the circle of theologians ; but, as the doubts to which we have referred have been promulgated among the laity, their refutation must also find a place in general literature.

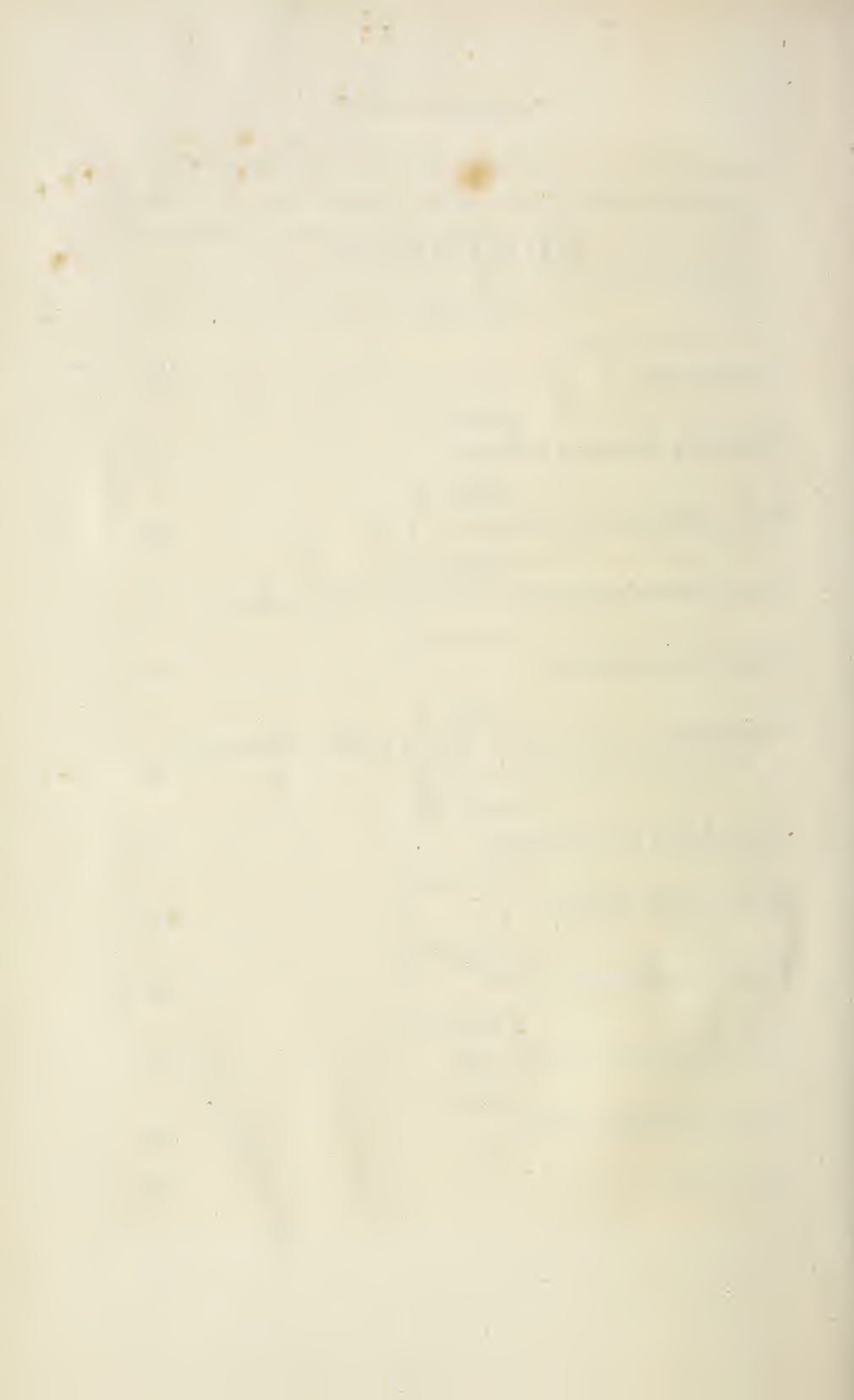
I should very readily have extended my investigations to the writings of the Old Testament ; but have not, in the first place, because the results of researches in regard to the Old Testament are of a less stable character than in regard to the New, and, moreover, because those who are not theologians by profession have far less need of such information in regard to the Old Testament as is here given concerning the New, inasmuch as to Christians the testimony of Christ and his apostles respecting the Old Testament, the canon of which was then completed, affords a much more certain evidence of its divine origin (and thus of its genuineness) than any historical reasoning could exhibit, especially since from the paucity of sources of information the latter could not be so satisfactory as it is in relation to the New Testament. As to unbelievers, it is of much greater consequence to urge the claims of the New Testament upon them than those of the Old, because, so long as they are opposed to the former, they certainly will not admit the latter. In my closing remarks, however, I have endeavored to designate briefly the right point of view in the determination of critical questions concerning the Old Testament.

To conclude, I pray that the Lord may be pleased graciously to accompany this my book with his blessing, and cause it to serve as an admonition to many a scoffer, and to console and set at ease the minds of such as have been perplexed with doubts.

OLSHAUSEN.

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INTRODUCTION.

FOR fifteen hundred years, the New Testament, as we now possess it, has been generally current in the Christian church, and constantly used, as well publicly in the churches, as likewise in the domestic circles of believers. This fact is admitted by the scholars of modern times unanimously, since it can be shown by the most certain historical proofs. Hence all investigations concerning the genuineness of the writings of the New Testament and the manner of its formation relate only to the first few centuries after the ascension of our Saviour and the death of the Apostles. Indeed, it is easily seen that in reality every thing must depend on this primitive period; for after the New Testament was once made up and generally admitted in the church, it could not be lost. Even before the invention of printing, it was spread abroad in all parts of the christian world by a multitude of copies, it being more frequently transcribed than all other books together. Hence, even supposing that the New Testament, say by war or devastation, had utterly perished in any country, it would immediately have been introduced again from surrounding ones. Of this, however, there is no example. Even such churches as entirely lost connection with the great Catholic church, and on that

account sank to a very low point, yet faithfully preserved the sacred Scriptures, as is proved by the instance of the Ethiopian church, in which, on its discovery after the lapse of centuries, the Bible was found still in use.

From the great importance of the New Testament to the church and the whole civilized world, it was a very natural desire on the part of scholars to know exactly how this momentous book was formed. On entering upon this inquiry, however, in the perusal of the earliest writers of the church, accounts were met with which were somewhat difficult of adjustment. It was found that even before the compilation of all the writings of the New Testament into one collection, many Fathers of the church, perfectly well disposed towards Christianity, had doubted the genuineness of particular books of the New Testament. This circumstance naturally arrested attention, and the next inquiry was, what grounds such early Fathers might have had for scruples respecting these writings. In considering this question, one thought he had discovered this reason and another that ; and it often happened that these reasons were considered weighty enough to justify the ancient doubts as to the genuineness of the books. It was at the Reformation, particularly, that this free investigation of the Bible began to extend widely ; and among the Reformers *Luther* himself was specially remarkable for it. From these inquiries he became fully convinced of the genuineness of most of the writings of the New Testament ; but he supposed it necessary to regard some of

them, e. g. the Epistle of James, and John's Revelation, as spurious. In this opinion he certainly erred, particularly, as is now acknowledged by nearly all scholars, in his rejection of the Epistle of James; but great as was, and still is, his authority in the eyes of many millions of Christians, his belief of the spuriousness of these two books has done no essential harm; they have maintained their place in the New Testament since as before, and the circumstance of his rejecting them has only shown the church the truth of the old remark that even God's saints may err.

From this example may be clearly seen, however, the total groundlessness of the fear of those who imagine that such scrutinizing inquiries must be, in and of themselves, prejudicial to the church. Such examinations of the origin of Holy Writ and its individual books are not only *allowable*, but absolutely *indispensable*; and they will injure the church, no more than gold is injured by being carefully tried in the fire. The church, like the gold, will but become purer for the test. In the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, the eternal revelation of God reposes in quiet security and brightness. A wonderful divine ordination has preserved it to us without any essential injury through a succession of dark ages. It exerts at the present day, upon all minds receptive of its spirit, the same blessed, sanctifying influence which the apostles claimed for it eighteen centuries ago. How, then, can these sacred books suffer from careful historical inquiry respecting their origin? Investigation must rather serve

to confirm and fully establish belief in their purity and genuineness. That this is actually the effect of really learned investigations is apparent, likewise, from the following instance. When the very erudite and truly pious Professor *Bengel*, of Tübingen, published his New Testament with all the various readings which he had been able to discover, many minds were filled with anxiety, thinking that an entirely new Testament would be the result in the end, if all the various readings were hunted up. They thought it would be better to leave things as they were. But mark—although 40,000 various readings were discovered in the ancient Mss., the New Testament was hardly at all altered thereby; for very few readings were of a nature to have any essential bearing upon a doctrine. Most of them consisted of unimportant transpositions, or permutations of synonymous words (such as in English *also* for *and*, etc.); and though some readings were more considerable (as e. g. the celebrated passage, 1 John 5: 7: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one,” which must certainly be regarded as spurious), still they are really of no more consequence. For such is the nature of the Holy Scriptures, that there are always many proof-passages for any important doctrine, and hence although these words are withdrawn from the Bible, their purport is still eternally true, and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity remains at the present time, as before, the doctrine of the church. Now that all the Mss. have been read and accurately collated,

there is no further occasion for fear that somewhere or other something new may be discovered, which will thrust the old loved Bible aside. Moreover, the principles on which scholars determine the right one among different readings of the same passage are so skilfully devised that it is almost impossible for a false reading to creep in ; and, should one individual err in this respect, another immediately steps in and corrects the error.

It certainly is not to be denied that pious persons, who valued God's word, might well for some time be anxious at heart ; for one biblical book after another was stricken from the list of those which were genuine, and at last we seemed to have none but spurious books in the Bible ; though on the other hand it remained inexplicable who could have taken pains either to forge so many spurious writings himself, or to make a collection of them after they were forged. And then, what could have been the character of the deceitful author or authors (for at all events the books must have been written by somebody) who could compose *such* writings, —writings which for many centuries have consoled millions in calamity and death. It is now seen, however, that the reason why things were so for a time, was not that men inquired and investigated (for no injury can ever accrue on that account), but that they did not prosecute the investigation with a *right spirit and disposition*. Every one can see that it is not a matter of indifference with what feelings we engage in investigations of this kind in regard to the sacred books.

Suppose a man so see in the books of the New Testament only monuments of antiquity, of just as little or as much value as other ancient writings, to have felt nothing of the saving influence of God's word upon his heart, and on that account to be devoid of love for it, yea, even to feel vexed that others should hold it so dear, and enviously and maliciously study how he might destroy their delight in this treasure—such a man, with his perverse disposition, would rake up any thing and every thing in order to undermine the foundation of the church. Whether such corrupt motives have really operated in the heart of any inquirer, no man can determine. It is always presumption to take it upon ourselves to judge respecting the internal position or intention of any heart. We may even suppose one who rejects the whole New Testament to possess honesty and sincerity, which want only the necessary light of conviction. But the *possibility* that such motives may affect these investigations, certainly cannot be denied; and that is fully enough for our purpose. If, moreover, we look at the manner in which a *Voltaire* among the French, and a *Bahrdr* among the Germans, have treated the sacred books, we find cogent reason to *fear* that *they* did not keep themselves free from such corrupt motives, however heartily we wish that God's judgment may pronounce them pure. This consideration is of importance, however, because we may see from it how all depends on this interior state of mind with which a man commences his undertakings; so that even the noblest enterprise may by an unholy inten-

tion lead to pernicious results. But, setting entirely aside the possibility that a man may undertake investigations respecting the Scriptures in a positively corrupt state of mind, he may also do much injury therein from *levity and frivolity*. If he is not sufficiently penetrated with a conviction of the great importance of investigations concerning the genuineness of the sacred Scriptures, if he does not treat the weaknesses of the church with sufficient tenderness, (for she may feel herself wounded in her most sacred interests by the inconsiderate expression of doubts), it may easily happen that, at the first impulse, upon some supposed discovery, this discovery will immediately be blazoned before the world, without having been previously *tested* with soberness and care by all the means within reach. There is little reason to doubt that vanity is commonly at the bottom of this superficial haste ; for it is always delightful to what Paul calls the *old man* to be the author of any new and striking opinion. Had all inquirers been able properly to restrain this vain desire to shine, much offence would without doubt have been avoided, and many a heart would have escaped considerable suffering.

Still, in what department of life or knowledge have we not many errors to lament ? He who knows his own heart aright will therefore forgive learned men if they have now and then been governed by vanity or other wrong motives. The misuse of a good thing should not abolish its use ; and it is still true that all investigations respecting the sacred books, their histo-

ry, and compilation, are in themselves very useful and necessary, as without them we must be entirely in the dark in regard to their true character. We will only wish that henceforth the God of truth and love may infuse truth and love into the hearts of all inquirers, and then it will not be of any consequence that many books have been *pronounced* spurious ; for fortunately they do not *become* spurious from the assertions of this or that man, and it is always allowable for another scholar to point out the errors of his predecessor. From this freedom of investigation the truth will certainly come to light by degrees.

If the thoughts here presented be duly considered, it will be readily seen that he who has deep love for the word of God need not take it much to heart that this or that scholar has rejected a particular book. After long investigation, and frequent assertions that most of the books of the New Testament are spurious, it is nevertheless now agreed among scholars generally, *that all the writings of the New Testament are genuine productions of the apostles*. As to several of them, it is true, precise certainty has not been attained, but it is to be hoped that uniformity will be exhibited soon in regard to these likewise ; and moreover, the difference of opinion in this view concerning several of these books is not so dangerous as it may appear. Concerning the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, e. g., there is not uniformity of sentiment as yet. Many very estimable divines, with whom I feel myself constrained to coincide in opinion on this point, think that the Epistle was not

composed by the Apostle Paul, but by some other very worthy member of the apostolic church. It is clear, however, that even though Paul did not write the Epistle, we cannot on this ground regard it as spurious, inasmuch as its author is not mentioned in it. Hence, the only question in relation to it is, *who* was its author? and on that point it is hard to decide, from the obscurity of the accounts given by the ancient Fathers of the church. All, however, regard this Epistle as genuine, i. e. it is universally believed that its author composed it without any intention to palm it off as the production of somebody else, for instance the apostle Paul. Had that been his purpose, he would have taken care that the Epistle should at once be recognized as Paul's production, by assigning his name to it or in some other way. The case is certainly different as to *the second Epistle of Peter*, against the genuineness of which many doubts are prevalent. In relation to this Epistle, the first inquiry is not *who* was its author, for the apostle Peter is most clearly designated as such, but *whether* Peter was really and truly the author. If the conclusion be, that the Epistle cannot be attributed to Peter, then it must be forged or spurious. It has been attacked with more plausibility than any other book of the New Testament; and yet much may be said even in behalf of this Epistle, as we shall see hereafter. We may therefore assert that by Divine Providence some good has already accrued from the rigorous sifting to which the books of the New Testament have been subjected in our day. True, it

did at first seem as if the whole New Testament would in the course of time be declared spurious ; but, when the first heat was over and sober perspicacity returned, it was seen by inquirers, that far the greater part of its books rested on a firmer historical foundation than most works of profane antiquity which all the world regard as genuine. Hence we may be of good courage in entering on the consideration of the individual books of the New Testament ; for the result of critical investigation is by no means so much to be dreaded as is sometimes thought. First, however, we desire to premise something further respecting *the New Testament generally*.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW TESTAMENT GENERALLY.

THE oldest traces of the existence of the whole New Testament as a settled collection occur so late as three centuries after the time of the apostles. The particular reason why so long a period elapsed before this body of writings became definitely determined was, that its individual books, which of course existed before the whole collection, were at first circulated in part singly and in part in smaller collections. For, so long as the apostles were upon earth, and the power of the Spirit from on high was in lively action in every member of the church, so long there was no sensible necessity of a book to serve as the norm or rule of faith and practice. Whenever any uncertainty arose in regard to either, application was made to one of the apostles, and his advice was taken. The Epistles of the apostle Paul owe their origin in part to such inquiries. Now some of the apostles lived to a very great age. Peter and Paul, it is true, died under the emperor Nero (67 A. D.), suffering martyrdom at Rome; but the Evangelist John, who outlived all the rest, was upwards of ninety years of age at his death, which did not happen till the time of the emperor Domitian, at the close of the first century. Hence, in the lifetime

of the apostles, though their writings were highly valued, they were naturally not regarded as sacred writings, which were to be the rule of faith; because there was a more immediate guarantee of truth in the living discourse of the apostles and their first companions, as also in the Holy Spirit, which was so powerfully exerting its influence upon the church. The apostolic writings, therefore, were indeed read in the public assemblies, but not alone, and not regularly. The book for regular public reading was still the Old Testament; and this is always to be understood in the New Testament when the Holy Scriptures are mentioned. Besides the apostolic writings, however, other profitable books were used for the edification of the church. In particular, we have still some remains of the writings of immediate disciples of the apostles, commonly called *apostolic Fathers*, which were publicly read in the ancient churches. These men all lived in the first century and some time in the second. Among them are *Clement*, bishop of Rome, *Ignatius*, bishop of Antioch, *Polycarp*, bishop of Smyrna, *Hermas*, who was probably presbyter at Rome, and the well-known *Barnabas*. The Epistles of Clement and Polycarp, as well as the Book of Hermas, were read with special assiduity in the ancient churches. On account of the great antiquity of these writings, the books of the New Testament are very seldom quoted in them, and much of what coincides with the contents of the New Testament, e. g. Christ's sayings, may have been drawn by these apostolic Fathers from oral tradition as

well as from perusal of the gospels. Indeed, the former source is perhaps most probable, since Christians certainly did not then read the Gospels so assiduously as they were read in later times, when they could no longer listen to the living discourse of the apostles and their immediate companions. The reason why so few written remains of the immediate disciples of our Lord are now extant, is in part the long lapse of time, which has destroyed many books once current, but in part, also, that the ancient Christians labored more than they wrote. The preaching of the gospel and the regulation of infant churches consumed so much of their time, that little remained to be employed in composition. Moreover, in the first century it was always as when Paul wrote the following declaration (1 Cor. 1: 26): "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many noble were called." For the most part only people of inferior standing joined the church of Christ; and these had neither the capacity nor the inclination to labor with the pen. In these circumstances it is undoubtedly true that we find little information concerning the books of the New Testament in the first centuries. That they did nevertheless exist in the church, we shall prove hereafter. But it might be expected, then, that although the most ancient Christians do not speak of their sacred writings, still the heathen writers of Greece and Rome must have done so, considering the multiplicity of their works on all subjects. The heathen writers, however, who were contemporary with the apostles and the apostolic church make no mention of the apostolic wri-

tings, because they cared nothing at all about the Christian church. They considered the Christians as only a sect of the Jews, and despised them as much as they did the latter. They therefore credited the malicious reports which were circulated respecting the Christians, and treated them accordingly as the off-scouring of humanity. Such is the procedure of *Tacitus*, a noble Roman, who relates the persecution of the Christians under Nero. Thus, of course, nothing could induce the Greeks and Romans to cultivate acquaintance with the writings of the Christians; particularly as they were distasteful on another account, from their not being clothed in the same elegant language as their productions. It was only when the number of the Christians became so great as to excite apprehension, that they began to pay attention to every thing of importance concerning this new sect, and so at last to their sacred books. But it is not till after the middle of the second century that we find examples like that of *Celsus*, who, in order to confute the Christians, made himself acquainted with their sacred books.

The original condition of the primitive church, in which less stress was laid on the Scriptures than on the word of the apostles, was not indeed of long continuance. For the mighty outpouring of the Spirit, which on the day of Pentecost, filled the disciples of our Saviour, had hardly been communicated to a considerable number of other minds and lost its first power, ere erroneous schisms began to prevail in the churches. The germs of these may even be discovered in

the writings of the apostles. The first of these party divisions of the ancient church was that of the *Jewish Christians*. As early as in the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul speaks expressly of persons who desired to bring the Galatian Christians again under the yoke of the law. They wished faith in Christ and his redemption to be regarded as insufficient for salvation, unless circumcision and the observance of the law were added. The great preacher of the Gentiles, however, zealously opposes this restricted idea of Christianity, and shows that the soul must lose Christ, if it seeks to use any other means of salvation. It was the object of the law of Moses to lead by its injunctions to conviction of sin, and thus to a desire for salvation; by its prophecies and types of Christ it was a school-master to guide us to him; but salvation itself could come only from Christ. Still, Paul was by no means of opinion that those who were Jews by birth must not observe the law when they became Christians; he rather favored their doing so, if the pious customs of their fathers had become dear to them, or if their own weakness or that of the Jews around them would be offended by the contrary course. Hence, the apostles who remained in Jerusalem till its destruction, as did Matthew and James, observed the law invariably, and so did Paul likewise, when he was in Jerusalem. But the apostles, as well as their true disciples, were far from being desirous to impose this observance of the law upon the Gentiles also. The milder and really christian view of the observance of the law was constantly entertained

by many Jewish Christians in Palestine, who in later times were called *Nazarenes*. Many, on the contrary, took the wrong course, which the apostle Paul reprov- ed in certain individuals in Galatia, and these obtained the name of *Ebionites*. They however fell into other heresies besides their idea of the necessity of circum- cision and observance of the law in order to salvation ; particularly in regard to the person of Christ. They denied the real divinity of our Lord and regarded him as a son of Joseph, thus seceding wholly from the true church of Christ.

In precise contrariety to this *Judaizing* division of the church, others entirely discarded Judaism. The instructions of the apostle Paul had taken deep hold of their minds, and given them a strong conviction that the gospel went far beyond the formalities of Jewish practice, and would bring all nations under its sway. But from this perfectly correct idea they wandered into an opposition to the Old Testament, which was never felt in the slightest degree by the apostle Paul. They remarked rightly, that in the Old Testament the divine *justice* was most prominently exhibited, in the revelation of a rigorous law ; while the New most fully displayed the divine *mercy* in the revelation of forgiving love. But this fact, which was necessary for the edu- cation of mankind, since the need of salvation will never be felt until the claims of justice are perceived, was employed by them for the purpose of wholly dis- uniting the Old Testament from the New, and referring it to a distinct author. This sect are termed *Marcion-*

ites, from Marcion, the man who urged this view to the greatest extreme. In connection with their opposition to Judaism they also held Gnostic opinions (whence they are commonly ranked with the Gnostics), and these gave a hue to their absurd notion, that the God of the Old Testament was different from that of the New. The Old Testament, they thought, presented to view a God of justice without love ; the New Testament one of love without justice ; while in reality the only true God possesses both attributes in perfection. It is easy to see that in these notions Paganism is mingled with Christianity. The sublime nature of the latter was admitted by the Marcionites ; but, they could not look upon the other true form of religion, Judaism, as reconcilable with it. Hence, although they no longer revered the numberless gods of the heathen, they imagined the two attributes of God, justice and love, to centre in two distinct divine beings. Besides this ungrounded violence against Judaism, the Marcionites maintained a silly error in regard to Christ's nature, which was the precise opposite of the opinion of the Jewish Christians. The latter denied his divinity, and the Marcionites asserted that he had no true humanity. The humanity of Christ, said they, was only apparent. In their opinion, a purely heavenly vision was presented in the person of Jesus Christ ; his life and all his acts in life were merely in appearance, designed to exhibit him to men in a human manner.

This idea the Marcionites entertained in common with the *Gnostics*, properly so called, who did indeed

judge more correctly than the former in regard to the mutual relation of Judaism and Christianity, but on other points maintained the most grievous errors. The seeds of their doctrine are referred to by the apostle Paul, e. g. in 2 Tim. 2: 17, 18, where he warns against the heresy of Hymenaeus and Philetus, who maintained that the resurrection of the dead had already taken place. For, as they denied the true humanity of Christ, they could not, of course, admit the corporeal resurrection of all men; and therefore understood it spiritually of the interior vivification of the heart by the spirit of Christ. Undoubtedly this perversion of doctrine on the part of the Gnostics is to be referred to their belief in another being besides God. While they regarded God as a pure spirit, the fulness of all good and all beauty, they looked upon matter as another being, the source of every thing corporeal and visible, as also of all evil. It was from a mixture of the spiritual and the material that this world originated, and particularly man, who at one time displays so much that is lovely and elevated, at another so much that is low and base. Thus, the only way to purify and sanctify man was that he should be gradually freed from every thing material and by the divine germs of life within him be brought back to God. It is easy to imagine what a distorted view of all the doctrines of salvation must be produced by such an idea, since Holy Writ nowhere countenances the opinion that evil resides in *matter*, but rather expressly refers it to the *will* of the creature, who, by disobedience to the holy will of

the Creator, has destroyed in himself and about him the harmony which originally prevailed in the whole universe.

In this condition of things, then, when Jewish Christians, Marcionites, and Gnostics, to say nothing of other insignificant sects, were disturbing the unity of the church, it was seen to be necessary that every effort should be exerted to uphold the purity of the apostolic doctrines. But as, at the time when these sects became very powerful, the apostles were no longer upon earth, no direct appeal could be made to their authority. Whenever oral tradition was adduced against them, these heretics appealed themselves to pretended communications from the apostles. The Gnostics, in particular, asserted that the deep wisdom which they taught in their schools was communicated by the apostles to only a few ; very simple Christian truth alone, they supposed, was only for the multitude. What remained, therefore, since appeal to oral tradition from the apostles was of no avail, but reference to written authority ? This could not be altered and falsified like oral language ; it was better suited to be a fixed, unchangeable norm and rule of faith ; and could, therefore, be employed with exceeding force and efficiency against all heretics. Thus the time was now come when a sifting and separation of the many professedly christian writings scattered abroad in the church was necessary. Moreover, the different sects of heretics had all sorts of forged writings among them, in which their peculiar opinions were presented in the names of

celebrated prophets and apostles. Against such writings explicit declaration must be made, in order to preserve the true apostolic doctrine from mixture with erroneous and confused notions. As, of course, however, individual Fathers of the church could have but little influence against the established sects of heretics, it was felt to be necessary that real Christians should be more closely and intimately united, and from the endeavor consequently made sprang the so-called *Catholic*, i. e. *universal church*. The teachers of the church, as well as the laity, agreed together in the avowal of certain doctrines, which afterwards formed their creed, or the so-called *apostolic symbol*, because in them the true apostolic doctrines were stated in opposition to heretics. Thus it became practicable to set firm bounds to the tide of corruption; and thus the various sects were gradually suppressed by the preponderant influence of the universal church. Still some of them lasted down to the fifth and sixth centuries.

This sifting of the various christian writings demands a more careful consideration. It has been before remarked that certain edifying productions of estimable Fathers, e. g. *Clement* of Rome, *Hermas* and others, were publicly read along with those of the apostles. Still, however profitable the perusal of these writings might be, the bishops of the Catholic church correctly felt that they could be of no service against heretics, as these would not allow them any weight. Since, however, they commonly acknowledged the writings of the apostles, these and these alone could be appealed to in

confutation of them. All such writings, therefore, as were allowed to be the compositions of other authors were first separated from the rest. If this had not been done, it would have remained uncertain in all subsequent time what books were properly to be regarded as pure sources of apostolic doctrine ; and at the time of the Reformation it would not have been so easy to restore the true uncorrupted doctrine of Christ by means of the Scriptures, as it actually was, on account of the circumstance that the genuine Scriptures were possessed in a separate, fixed collection. Now, in the endeavor to gather the genuine apostolic writings together by themselves, some of them were very easily distinguished from the rest as the apostolic productions. These were called universally-admitted writings ; in in Greek *Homologoumena*. Among these were reckoned the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John ; the Acts of the Apostles ; the Epistles of the apostle Paul to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon ; and, lastly two Epistles of John and Peter, viz., only the first and largest of both apostles. Among these writings, it is true, there appear two which were not composed by apostles, i. e. by members of the first circle of twelve men which our Lord Jesus gathered about him. [It is to be observed that *Paul* ranked with these in authority, partly because of his immediate call by the Lord (Acts ix.) and partly on account of his extended and blessed labors in behalf of the church.] We mean the

Gospel of Mark and the work of Luke. We say the *work* of Luke, for Luke's Gospel and his Acts of the Apostles do but make two halves of the same work, as is plain from the commencement of the Acts. There was no scruple on the part of the Catholic church to class these two works of assistants of the apostles with those really apostolic, because both wrote under the influence and approval of apostles. According to the unanimous account of the most ancient Christian Fathers, Mark wrote under the guidance of Peter, and Luke under that of Paul, so that Mark's was regarded as the Petrine and Luke's as the Pauline Gospel.

These universally-received writings of the apostles were divided into two collections. *First*, the four Gospels by themselves formed a collection called *the Gospel*. For, although this collection contained four narratives of our Lord's life, they were not regarded as different writings, but only as different aspects or, so to speak, *sides* of one and the same work. Hence an ancient Father of the church, Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons in France, terms the four Gospels, the one four-formed or four-sided Gospel. The other writings constituted a *second* collection, which was termed *the apostle*, or the preaching of the apostle. Probably the name took its rise from the fact, that at first the Epistles of Paul alone were collected together, and he was called the apostle, by way of eminence, especially in Europe, on account of his active labors. To this collection of Pauline Epistles the Acts of the Apostles were added subsequently, because it formed, as it were,

an introduction to the Epistles, containing an account of Paul's travels and labors in the vineyard of our Lord. Later still were also added the two larger Epistles of John and Peter.

Besides these generally-admitted writings, there were others, which were indeed regarded by many as apostolic, but as to which some estimable persons entertained doubts, viz., the second and third Epistles of John, the second Epistle of Peter, the Epistles of James and Jude, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and John's Apocalypse. Hence these were termed *disputed writings*, in Greek *Antilegomena*. About the close of the second or the commencement of the third century, most of the Fathers of the Catholic church became united in believing the genuineness and apostolic origin of all these writings excepting the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse. A *third* small collection was now formed of these Epistles, and into it were transferred the two larger Epistles of John and Peter, which were at first contained in the *second* collection. Consequently, the third comprised *seven Epistles*, which were called the *seven Catholic* i. e. *universally-admitted Epistles*, in contra-distinction from the various rejected writings. Out of these collections there now remained, therefore, only the *Epistle to the Hebrews* and the *Revelation* of John. In regard to the Epistle, as has been already mentioned, no doubt was entertained of its genuineness ; the only controversy was, whether Paul was its author or not. At last, the opinion that it was Pauline prevailed, and it was introdu-

ced into the collection of Pauline Epistles ; though, as the collection was already made up, it was placed at the end, after the small Epistle to Philemon. In the Lutheran version of the Bible, however, the Epistle obtained another place, viz. between the third Epistle of John and the Epistle of James, for reasons which will be stated hereafter. The whole question, therefore, in regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews was of little consequence ; for, if Paul did not write it, it is certain that the author of it wrote under his guidance (as will be shown more at length in the sequel), and the case is the same with this Epistle as with the Gospels of Mark and Luke. It is otherwise, however, with the history of the *Apocalypse*, which also will be particularly related hereafter. Although it has the oldest and most trust-worthy witnesses in its behalf, indeed beyond most of the writings of antiquity, it still early met with numerous assailants, on account of its contents. True, many did not exactly regard it as spurious ; they only maintained that it was written, not by John the Evangelist, but by another man of less note, bearing the same name. Others, however, felt such excessive dislike towards the book, that they declared it must have been composed by the worst of heretics. Yet here, too, truth fortunately obtained the victory, and the genuine apostolic character of this elevated production of prophetic inspiration was at last acknowledged. As the three smaller collections were already made up, nothing remained but to place it at the end of them all. This was precisely the position

to which the Apocalypse belonged ; for, considering the Gospels to be, as it were, the root of the tree of life exhibited in the whole New Testament, and the Epistles as the branches and blossoms, the Apocalypse may be regarded as the fully ripened fruit. It contains a picture of the development of God's church down to the end of time, and therefore forms the conclusion of the Bible as properly as Genesis forms its commencement.

In order that the various writings and small collections might be permanently united, the smaller divisions were entirely given up in the fourth century, and henceforward there was but one great collection, containing all the New Testament writings. A decisive decree on this point was issued by a council held in the year 393 at *Hippo*, now Bona, in Africa. In itself considered, this union of the smaller collections into a single large one is of no consequence, and hence, too, it is of none that it took place at so late a period ; for, as early as during the third century and the commencement of the fourth, there was entire unanimity in regard to all essential questions concerning the books of the New Testament, as the following particular history of them will evince. Still there was this advantage arising from the union of the apostolic writings into one body, viz. that they were in a more safe and determinate form, and might now be placed with the Old Testament as a complete second part of Holy Writ.

CHAPTER II.

THE COLLECTION OF THE GOSPELS.

OF the three smaller collections of the writings of the New Testament, which, as we have before stated, were in use in the ancient church, none can be traced further back than that of the Gospels. We find so many and so weighty testimonies in its behalf, that it would seem as though Providence designed that this palladium of the church should be in a special manner secure against all attacks. Not only is it the case that some of the most ancient Fathers testify to its existence, as, e. g., *Tertullian*, *Clement* of Alexandria, *Irenaeus*, *Justin Martyr* (all of whom lived in the second century after Christ, and were preceded only by the so-called apostolic Fathers); but, moreover, the witnesses in its behalf belonged to all parts of the ancient church. *Tertullian* lived in Carthage; *Clement* in Egypt; *Irenaeus* was born in Asia Minor, and became bishop of Lyons in France; *Justin Martyr* was born in Palestine (in Flavia Neapolis, otherwise called Sichem), but taught in Rome. Thus the testimonies in favor of the collection of the Gospels come from all the chief stations in the ancient church; and this circumstance, of course, supposes its very general diffusion. The greatest number of testimonies, all proceeding from *one* pro-

vince, would not be of so much weight as these coincident declarations from the most various parts of the world, as to the currency of the Gospels. A circumstance, however, still more important than these testimonies from different parts of the ancient church is, that not only the members of the Catholic orthodox church, but the heretics also, were familiar with our Gospels. If it be considered, what violent mutual animosity there was between the Fathers of the Catholic church and the heretics ; that one party would not adopt or receive anything at all from the other, but was rather disposed to reject it, for the very reason that it came from so detested a quarter ; no one can help seeing in the circumstance that both the Catholic church and the heretics were familiar with the collection of our Gospels an uncommonly cogent proof of its genuineness and great antiquity. For, had it been formed *after* the rise of these sects, either within the pale of the Catholic church, or in the midst of this or that party of heretics, it would be wholly inexplicable, how it could have been introduced into these sects from the church, or, *vice versâ*, into the church from these sects. Thus the collection of our Gospels must at all events have taken place *before* such sects arose ; for on no other ground can it be explained how these books, which were generally known and used before open rupture in the church, should have been admitted as genuine by both parties alike. Now the sects of the Gnostics and Marcionites originated as early as the beginning of the second century ; and from this circum-

stance we are entitled to regard the collection of the Gospels as in existence at a period very near the times of the apostles. Besides the heretics, moreover, we find Pagans acquainted with the collection of the Gospels. We refer particularly to *Celsus*, a violent opponent of Christianity, against whose attacks it was defended by *Origen*. It is true this man did not live till about two hundred years after the birth of Christ (we do not know the precise period); but it is, notwithstanding, a decisive evidence of the general diffusion and acknowledgment of the Gospels throughout the church, that they are cited and assailed by pagan opponents as official sources of the christian doctrines. For, had Celsus been aware that Christians themselves did not acknowledge these writings, it would have been an absurd undertaking to refute the Christians from the contents of the books.

Further; it is a wholly peculiar circumstance in the history of the Gospels, and one which goes a great way to sustain their genuineness, that we nowhere find, in any writer of any part of the ancient world, any indication that only a single one of the four Gospels was in use, or even known to exist separately. *All possessed the entire collection of the Gospels*. It is true, there is one writer, *Papias*, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, concerning whom there is no express statement, that he had all the four Gospels. But the manner in which *Eusebius* speaks respecting him in his Church-history is such, that there is nothing questionable in this silence. Eusebius adduces from a work of

Papias, now not extant, some notices of Matthew and Mark. It is certainly true that nothing is said of Luke and John ; but this is undoubtedly because the ancient bishop had not made any particular observations on these two Gospels. His silence respecting them is the less an evidence that he was not acquainted with them, as the theatre of the labors of Papias was in the vicinity of Ephesus, where John lived so long and moreover wrote his Gospel. On this account Papias must necessarily have been acquainted with it. Eusebius, moreover, remarks in the same place, that Papias was acquainted with the first Epistle of John. How much rather, then, with his Gospel ? Thus, Eusebius says nothing concerning Luke and John, only because it was a matter of course that Papias was familiar with them, and the latter had not said any thing special in regard to their origin. There were moreover, some heretics who made use of but *one* Gospel, e. g. Marcion used Luke, and the Ebionites Matthew ; but they had special reasons for doing so, in their doctrinal opinions. They did not, by any means, deny the three other Gospels to be genuine ; they only asserted that their authors were not true disciples of our Lord. Marcion held the erroneous notion, that all the disciples, with the exception of Paul, still continued *half-Jews*. The Jewish Christians maintained that all the disciples except Matthew had strayed away *too far from* Judaism, and on that account did not receive their writings. In this state of the case, there is clear evidence from their opinions also that the Gospels are

genuine, and were in that day generally diffused in the church. Now, as the collection of our four Gospels existed so very early and so universally, the inquiry occurs, how it could have originated? Shall we say that a particular individual or church may have formed it and it may then have spread itself every where abroad? This supposition seems to be countenanced by the circumstance of the general uniformity as to the order of the four Gospels. A very few Mss. place John next to Matthew, in order that the writings of the apostles may be by themselves. Clearly, however, this transposition arose from the fancy of some copyist and has no historical foundation. There is still therefore positive authority for the universally received arrangement. The most weighty circumstance against the opinion that the first collection of the Gospels was made in a particular place, and diffused itself abroad from thence, is, that we have no account respecting such a process; though we should expect one, from the fact that John lived, and moreover wrote his Gospel, at so late a period. For this reason, had the Evangelist John himself, as some suppose, or any other man of high authority in the church, formed the collection of the Gospels, we should, one would think, have had an account of its formation, as it could not have taken place before the end of the first or commencement of the second century, which period borders very closely on that from which we derive so many accounts concerning the Gospels. But this same circumstance, that we read nothing at all respecting a collector of the

Gospels, that writers have been left to conjecture in regard to the manner in which the collection of them was made, leads to another view of its formation, which casts the clearest light on the genuineness of the books. It is in the highest degree probable that our Gospels all originated in capital cities of the Roman empire. *Matthew* probably wrote his in Jerusalem, the centre of Judaism, where, also, as appears from the Acts of the Apostles, a large Christian church was early gathered. *Mark* and *Luke* undoubtedly wrote in Rome, the political centre of the empire, to which innumerable multitudes of men thronged from all quarters of the world for the transaction of business. In this city, too, a flourishing Christian church was early formed, as is seen from the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, which was written before Peter, or Paul, or any apostle, had visited Rome. Lastly, *John* wrote at Ephesus, a large and thriving city of Asia Minor. It was the residence of many learned and ingenious heathen. The large church at Ephesus was, according to the Acts, founded by Paul. It was fostered by the labors of John. Now let it be considered, how many thousands must, consequently, have been most exactly aware who wrote the Gospels, and it will be perceived that these circumstances afford weighty evidence of their genuineness, particularly, as *there is not to be found in a single ancient writer the faintest trace of any doubt in regard to it*; for the heretics, who, as we have remarked, disputed the Gospels in part, did not deny their genuineness (they rather fully admitted

it), but only their obligatory authority. Now, as very active intercourse was maintained among the Christians of the ancient church, partly by constant epistolary communications and partly by frequent personal visits, nothing is more natural than the supposition, that the Christians of Jerusalem very soon transmitted the Gospel of Matthew which was composed in the midst of them, to Rome, Ephesus, Alexandria, and other places, and that, on the other hand, those of Rome and Ephesus also transmitted the writings composed among them to the other churches. In every church there were archives, in which were deposited important documents. Into these archives of the church the Gospels were put, and as only these four Gospels were composed or vouched for by apostles, the collection of Gospels took its rise, not in this or that place, but in every quarter simultaneously. This statement of the matter is, in the first place, strictly in accordance with the circumstances known to us in regard to the ancient church, and also the only one capable of explaining satisfactorily the existence of the collection in every body's hands while no one knew how and whence it originated. As, further, we find *no other* Gospel but these in general use, it is clearly evident that only these four were of apostolic origin. It is true we find in circulation in individual churches Gospels which appear to have differed from our own; e. g. the church at Rhossus in Cilicia, a province of Asia Minor, made use of a Gospel of Peter, and in Alexandria one called the Gospel of the Egyptians was current. It is possi-

ble, however, that these two writings were either the same or at least were very nearly allied, and also bore close affinity to our Mark; and in that case their use is as easily accounted for as the use of Matthew and Luke by the Ebionite and Marcionite sects in Recensions somewhat altered from the original.

From this cursory view of the evidence in favor of the genuineness of the Gospels, it cannot but be admitted that no work can be adduced out of the whole range of ancient literature, which has so many and so decisive ancient testimonies in its behalf, as they. It is therefore, in reality, a mere labored effort to try to maintain and demonstrate the spuriousness of the Gospels. Since, however this attempt is made, it may reasonably be inquired: *Whence is derived any occasion for doubt? Is not every thing without exception in favor of their genuineness?* We cannot but say, that no thorough, serious-minded scholar would ever have denied the genuineness of the Gospels, had not the question in regard to their genuineness been conjoined with another investigation of extreme difficulty and intricacy. In the ardent endeavor to get rid of this difficulty, scholars have been seduced into the invention of hypotheses irreconcilable with the genuineness of the Gospels. They should, on the contrary, have set out invariably with the admission of their genuineness, as an irrefragable fact, and then have employed only such modes of solving the difficulty above alluded to as were based on the supposition of their genuineness. The difficulty is this. On a close compar-

ison of the first three Gospels we discover a very striking coincidence between them. This is exhibited, not merely in the facts and the style, but also in the order of narration, in the transitions from one narrative to another, and in the use of uncommon expressions, and other things of the same character. Further ; the coincidence is interrupted by just as striking a dissimilarity, in such a manner that it is in the highest degree difficult to explain how this coincidence and this dissimilarity, as it is exhibited in the Gospels, can have originated. This is a purely learned investigation, which writers should have quietly prosecuted as such, without allowing it to influence the question respecting the genuineness of the Gospels. Such has been its influence, however, that some scholars suppose a so-called *Protevangelion*, or original Gospel, which the apostles, before they left Jerusalem and scattered themselves abroad over the whole earth, prepared in order to serve as a guide to them in their discourses. This writing is supposed to have contained the principal events of the life of our Lord. It was carried into all lands by the apostles. Now in these different countries, it is said by the defenders of this hypothesis, additions were gradually made to this original Gospel. These were at first short, and thus arose the Gospels of the Jewish Christians, the Marcionites, and others ; afterwards they became longer, and in this way, at last, our Gospels were produced. Now as it cannot be stated by whom these additions were made, this view is really equivalent to making our Gospels spurious,

for, according to it, only the little portion of them which existed in the brief original Gospel is of apostolic authority. But, setting aside the fact that the hypothesis must be false, for this very reason, because it opposes the genuineness of the Gospels, which can be demonstrated by historical proof; this theory has been, moreover, of late utterly discarded by learned men on other grounds. In the first place, no ancient Christian writer exhibits any acquaintance with such an original Gospel; and is it conceivable that the knowledge of so remarkable a work should have been totally lost? Then, too, the idea that a guide was composed by the apostles for themselves, in order to preserve unity in doctrine, is not at all suited to the apostolic period. At this period the Holy Spirit operated with its primeval freshness and power. This Spirit, which guided into all truth, was the means of preserving unity among the apostles. Not an individual of those witnesses to the truth needed any external written guide. Besides, this supposition solves the difficulty in question respecting the coincidence of the Gospels only in a very meagre and forced manner, while there is a much simpler way of reaching the same result far more satisfactorily. We must suppose more than one source of this characteristic of the first three Gospels. *Sometimes* one Evangelist was certainly made use of by another. This remark is applicable particularly to Mark, who undoubtedly was acquainted with and made use of both Matthew and Luke. *Moreover*, there existed short accounts of particular parts of the Gospel history,

such as narratives of particular cases of healing, relations of journeys, and the like. Now when two Evangelists made use of the same brief account, there naturally resulted a resemblance in their history. Still, as each was independent in his use of these accounts, some variations also occurred. *Finally*; much of the similarity between them arose from oral narrations. It is easy to believe that certain portions of the evangelical history, e. g. particular cures, parables, and discourses of our Lord, were repeated constantly in the very same way, because the form of the narrative imprinted itself with very great exactness on every one's memory. In this manner the songs of Homer and Ossian were long transmitted from mouth to mouth. Uniformity in an oral mode of narration is not sufficient of itself alone to explain the relation between the Gospels, because in prose it is impossible (in poetry it is much easier) to imprint on the memory minute traits and important forms of expression with so much exactness as would be necessary to account for the mutual affinity of the Gospels; and, moreover, could their similarity be thus explained, the variations between them would only stand out in more troublesome relief. But that which cannot be effected by a single hypothesis can be by that in conjunction with others. And here, perhaps, we may see the true solution of a problem which has so long occupied the attention of theologians. But, whatever opinion be entertained on this point, the investigation of it must always be kept aloof from the

question of the genuineness of the Gospels, which should first be established or denied on historical grounds. Thus will the collection of the Gospels be secure from all danger.

CHAPTER III.

THE INDIVIDUAL GOSPELS AND THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

OF the four Gospels, that of Matthew holds the first place in the canon. The author of this first Gospel, bore, besides the name of *Matthew*, that of *Levi* also (Matth. 9: 9. Mark 2: 14), and was the son of a certain Alpheus, of whom we have no further information. Of the history of Matthew very little is known in addition to the accounts in the New Testament. After our Saviour called him from his station as receiver of the customs, he followed him with fidelity, and was one of the twelve whom Jesus sent forth to preach. His labors as an apostle, however, seem to have been wholly confined to Palestine ; for, what is related of Matthew's travels in foreign countries is very doubtful, resting only on the authority of rather late ecclesiastical writings. But the information respecting him which is of most importance to our purpose is given with perfect unanimity by the oldest ecclesiastical writers, who declare that Matthew wrote a Gospel. It is true that they likewise subjoin, equally without exception, that Matthew wrote in *Hebrew*, at Jerusalem, and for believing Jews ; and that this account must be correct, we know from the fact that the Jewish Christians in

Palestine, who spoke Hebrew, all made use of a Gospel which they referred to Matthew. This Hebrew Gospel did, indeed, differ from our Greek Gospel of Matthew, for it contained many things wanting in our Gospel; but still it was in general so exactly like the latter, that a Father of the fourth century, the celebrated *Jerome*, felt himself entitled to treat the Hebrew Gospel expressly as Matthew's. It is a singular circumstance, however, that, while all the Fathers of the church declare Matthew to have written in Hebrew, they all, notwithstanding, make use of the Greek text as of genuine apostolic origin, without remarking what relation the Hebrew Matthew bore to our Greek Gospel; for that the oldest Fathers of the church did not possess Matthew's Gospel in any other form than that in which we now have it, is fully settled. That we have no definite information on this point is undoubtedly owing to accidental causes; but, since it is so, that we have not any certain account, we can only resort to conjecture in regard to the mutual relation of the Greek and Hebrew Matthew. Existing statements and indications, however, enable us to form conjectures which, it is in the highest degree probable, are essentially correct. The idea that some unknown individual translated the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew and that this translation is our canonical Gospel, is, in the first place, contradicted by the circumstance of the universal diffusion of this same Greek Gospel of Matthew, which makes it absolutely necessary to suppose that the translation was executed by some one of acknow-

ledged influence in the church, indeed of apostolic authority. In any other case, would not objections to this Gospel have been urged in some quarter or other, particularly in the country where Matthew himself labored, and where his writings were familiarly known ? There is not, however, the slightest trace of any such opposition to it. Besides ; our Greek Gospel of Matthew is of such a peculiar character that it is impossible for us to regard it as a mere version. Does a man, who is translating an important work from one language into another allow himself to make alterations in the book which he is translating, to change the ideas it presents ? Something of the kind must be supposed to have been done in the Greek Gospel of Matthew with regard to the Hebrew. This is beyond denial, if it be considered merely, how the quotations from the Old Testament are treated. These do not coincide either with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, or with the version in common use at the time of the apostles, viz. the Septuagint (which was executed by some learned Jews at Alexandria several centuries before the birth of Christ ; but rather exhibit an independent text of their own. Now, as sometimes the argument is wholly based on this independent character of the text in the citations from the books of the Old Testament, and could not have accorded at all with the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, it is clear that our Greek Gospel must be something else than a mere version. It is rather an independent work, though closely allied to the Hebrew Gospel of the apostle. Now, since this

same work is universally regarded as an apostolic production, and as having been written by Matthew, there is no more simple and effectual mode of solving all the characteristics of the Gospel of Matthew, than to suppose *that Matthew himself, when he had composed the Hebrew Gospel, executed likewise a free translation or new composition of it in the Greek language.* It makes no essential difference, if we suppose that a friend of Matthew wrote the Greek work under his direction and authority ; but Matthew's authority must necessarily be supposed to have been the means of the diffusion of the Gospel, as otherwise it is inexplicable that there does not appear the faintest trace of any opposition to it.

No definite *objections* can be made against our supposition that Matthew wrote a Greek Gospel besides his Hebrew one. A single circumstance, however, may appear strange ; viz. that *Papias*, the ancient bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, whom we have before mentioned, a man who was conversant with persons that had themselves seen and heard our Lord, informs us that every one endeavored to translate the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew as well as he was able. Thus, according to this passage, our universally-received Greek transformation of the Hebrew Gospel was not commonly known in Phrygia ; so that persons who did not very well understand Hebrew made use, as well as they could, of the Hebrew Gospel. But, the circumstance that the Greek Gospel of Matthew was not yet current in the immediate vicinity of Papias is no proof at all

that it was not yet in existence. For, as Matthew's work was already diffused throughout the church in the Hebrew language, and the Greek Gospel of Matthew corresponded with the Hebrew in every essential point, it was very natural that the Greek Gospel should be circulated in a more dilatory manner; and by some accident, it is probable, it was particularly tardy in reaching Phrygia. As, however, in the West generally, very few understood Hebrew, when the Greek Gospel of Matthew was once procured that only was circulated there, and thus the Hebrew Gospel was completely lost in Europe. In Palestine alone, as the Hebrew was better understood, the Gospel in that language continued in use; though it was encumbered with divers foreign additions by the Jewish Christians.

Thus, the genuineness of the Gospel of Matthew is fully confirmed on historical grounds, aside from its position in the collection of the Gospels. Recent investigators have raised doubts in regard to its genuineness from *internal* considerations. They say, in particular, that if the statements of Matthew in the character of eye-witness (for he was one of the twelve apostles) be compared with the descriptions of Mark who does not write as an eye-witness, it will be evident that the advantage is on the side of the latter. Every thing which Mark narrates is represented in so graphic a manner that it is plain he derived his accounts from eye-witnesses; while the narrative of Matthew whom we are to regard as himself an eye-witness in respect to most of his relations, is dry and without the least vivacity. This

remark is perfectly correct. Comparison of a few passages will at once show how much more minute and graphic are Mark's descriptions than those of Luke. This is particularly the case as to the accounts of cures. In these Mark frequently describes the circumstances of the sick person before and after the cure in so lively a manner as to make us imagine the scene really before us ; while Matthew, on the contrary, describes the occurrence only in very general terms. Let a comparison be made in this view between the following accounts which Matthew and Mark give of the same occurrences.

MATTH. 8: 28—34.

" And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out saying," etc.

Respecting their cure Matthew merely says (v. 32.) :—
" And he said unto them, Go.

MARK 5: 1—19.

" And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. (This is another reading for Gergesenes). And, when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs ; *and no man could bind him, no, not with chains : because that he had been often bound, with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces : neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice and said,*" etc.

Respecting his cure Matthew says (v. 13 and onward) : " And forthwith Jesus gave them

And when they were come out they went into the herd of swine, and behold, the whole herd of swine," etc.

9: 18—26.

20. "And, behold, a woman which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and plucked the hem of his garment."

14: 1—12.

Account of the execution of John the Baptist by Herod.

leave. And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine," etc. "And they (that were in the city and in the country) went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, *sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind*: and they were afraid."

5: 21—43.

25. "And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, *and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse*, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment."

Moreover, the whole account contained in verses 29—33 is in Mark only.

6: 14—29.

The whole narrative is given in Mark with much more minuteness and vivacity.

Such a difference in the style of narration runs throughout Matthew and Mark; and it cannot well be denied that at first view there is something surprising in it. But careful examination of the object of the two Gospels plainly shows whence this different manner of narration in Matthew and Mark takes its rise, and thus does away with all the inferences which have been deduced therefrom in opposition to the apostolic origin of Matthew. The reason why Mark describes the outward relations of our Lord's life in so vivid and graph-

ic a manner is, that it was his *special design* to portray *Christ's performance of the outward functions of his office*. Hence, all which related to that, he details very carefully ; while whatever did not pertain thereto he either entirely omits, as, e. g., the history of the childhood of Jesus, or communicates very briefly, as, e. g., many of our Lord's larger discourses. Matthew, on the contrary, makes it *his* chief object to communicate our *Lord's discourses*. He commonly makes use of events only as points of support for the discourses ; to which he, like John, directs special attention. If it be considered, moreover, that the graphic nature of style is, in great part, owing to peculiar talent, such as is not bestowed alike on all men, and such as was by no means requisite in every one of the apostles, there remains not a shadow of reason why the want of vivacity which is certainly exhibited in Matthew's Gospel should become a motive for denying its genuineness. In truth, moreover, there is no period at which a forgery of the Gospel in Matthew's name is even conceivable. For it is demonstrable from the book itself that it must have been composed a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and hence about sixty-six years after the birth of Christ. Now we find Matthew in use in the church before the close of the same century, at a time when John the Evangelist had but just died, and many disciples of the apostles were living and laboring in all parts of the world. How was it possible, in such circumstances, to introduce a work forged in the name of Matthew into so general currency that

not the very slightest opposition should ever have been raised against it ?

From what has been said it will have been inferred that the genuineness of *Mark* is not at all disputed. His graphic, lively manner has even been made to afford occasion for assailing the genuineness of Matthew. Nor, in truth, was there in ancient times the least opposition to Mark's Gospel. It was known to *Papias* of Hierapolis, i. e. as early as the close of the first century, and there is an unbroken chain of evidence in its favor since that time. It is true, Mark's work was, in all probability, written at Rome, at that time the capital of the known world, and therefore a fixed and sure tradition as to the author of the work might be formed at once, and would easily diffuse itself everywhere abroad. Still, however, there is one thing which appears very remarkable in regard to the rapid diffusion and reception of Mark, viz., that it was a production whose author was not an apostle. John Mark, frequently called Mark only, was the son of a certain Mary who had a house in Jerusalem (Acts 12: 12). Mark himself, as we are told in the Acts (12: 25. 13: 5. 15: 36 seq.), at first accompanied the apostle Paul in his travels for the dissemination of Christianity. He afterwards attached himself to his kinsman Barnabas. At a later period, however, we find him again in Paul's company (2 Tim. 4: 11). According to the Fathers, he was also, for a considerable time, closely connected with Peter, and was interpreter to the latter when he preached among the Greeks. He invariably, however,

occupied a dependent situation, and on this account it is impossible that his name alone should have procured his Gospel an introduction into the church. But, as has been already mentioned, Mark did not write without apostolic authority. *On the contrary, he was under the direction of the apostle Peter.* This is stated by the entire series of church-fathers during the second and third centuries, with perfect unanimity in the main ; and the statement is corroborated by the case of Luke, which was exactly similar. On this account, the Gospel of Mark was considered as originating with Peter, and such individuals as were particularly attached to this apostle used Mark in preference to all others. Unfortunately, however, we have no minute accounts as to this matter, and hence do not know whether these individuals corrupted the Gospel of Mark, as the Jewish Christians did that of Matthew, or not. It is possible, however, that the so-called *Gospel of the Egyptians* was a corruption of Mark ; though the fragments we have of it are not sufficient to enable us to form a certain opinion on this point.

As to *Luke*, we have more clear and certain evidence in this respect. We know that that sect which carried the sentiments of Paul to an erroneous extreme, the *Marcionites*, used only the Gospel of Luke, although Marcion was very well acquainted with the other Gospels and regarded them as genuine. They had, however, altered Luke in conformity with their opinions, and thus formed, as it were, a new Gospel out of it, which, notwithstanding, still retained much

resemblance to the original. The reason why the Marcionites selected Luke was, that this Gospel was written under the direction of the apostle Paul, who alone, in their opinion, was a genuine apostle of our Lord. Luke, as we know from the Acts of the Apostles, had travelled about with the apostle Paul for a long time, and, in particular, had also accompanied him to Rome. This is clear from the final chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Connecting this fact with the conclusion of the work, it is perfectly evident when the Evangelist finished it. According to the last chapter, Paul was two years in confinement at Rome. Here Luke breaks off, without mentioning the issue of his trial. Had this been concluded, should we not of course have had an account of the emperor's decision respecting the great apostle of the Gentiles? It can be made very probable by circumstances deduced from another quarter, that Paul was liberated from his first imprisonment at Rome, and did not suffer as a martyr till he had been a second time placed in bonds. Luke, however, abruptly breaks off in the midst of his narrative. Now, as the Acts of the Apostles are only the second part of Luke's work, the Gospel being the first (compare Luke 1: 1 with Acts 1: 1), the latter cannot have been written subsequently; and probably when Paul's death was apprehended, Luke wrote down the accounts he had received from him or through him, in order to secure them to posterity. Then the apostle, who was still living, attested the purity and accuracy of the work, and from Rome, the great central point of the religious as well

as the political world, it speedily made its way into the churches in every province of the vast Roman empire. Thus, it was not Luke's name which procured for this Gospel its currency in the church, *but the authority of the apostle Paul*. Without this, the work of Luke, with its two divisions, the Gospel and the Acts, would have been the less likely to obtain general credit, because it purports to be a mere private production, addressed to a certain *Theophilus*. It is, indeed, very probable that this Theophilus was a man of note, who was either already a member of the church or at least well-disposed towards it; but still he was only a private man, whose name could have no weight with the whole church. He had, probably, already perused divers accounts concerning Christ and the formation of the primitive churches, which, however, were not duly authentic and certain; and for this reason, Luke determined to compose for his use an authoritative history of the important events in our Lord's life and of the foundation of the churches. (Comp. Luke 1: 1—4.) Under these circumstances it is not astonishing that in the primitive church there was no opposition either to Luke's Gospel or his Acts of the Apostles.* The many and close relations of the writer, together with the apostolic authority in his behalf, were such evi-

* So far as the Acts of the Apostles speaks of the circumstances of Paul it has a perfect correspondence with Paul's Epistles, as the latter have with the former. See this fact more fully developed in the *fourth Chapter* of this treatise.

dence in favor of the work, that not a single valid suspicion could arise respecting its genuineness.

Lastly ; the circumstances in regard to the Gospel of *John* are particularly calculated to place its genuineness beyond dispute. For John the Evangelist lived much longer than any of the other apostles. So far as we know, none of the others were alive after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman emperor, in the year 70 A. D. John, however, survived it nearly thirty years, dying about the close of the first century, under the reign of the emperor Domitian. Hence many Christians who had heard of our Lord's farewell words to him (John 21: 22, 23) believed that John would not die ; an idea which the Evangelist himself declares erroneous. This beloved disciple of our Lord during the latter part of his life, as we know from testimonies on which perfect reliance may be placed, lived at Ephesus in Asia Minor, where the apostle Paul had founded a flourishing church. The importance of this church about the year 64 or 75 A. D. is evinced by Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians ; and subsequently it was very much enlarged. It was in this subsequent period that John wrote his Gospel. This is clear, *first*, from a comparison of the Gospel with the Revelation. This last work was written by John at an earlier period, before the destruction of Jerusalem. John's style in this prophetic composition is not so thoroughly easy as we find it at a later period in the Gospel, which he must have written after longer intercourse with native

Greeks. *Again*, John plainly had the three other Gospels before him when he wrote. For he omits all which they had described with sufficient minuteness, e. g. the institution of the holy supper, and only relates that which was new respecting the life of his Lord and Master. Hence, these must have been already composed, and also so generally diffused that John could presume them universally known in the church. *Moreover*, the persons to whom John's work has special reference, viz. certain Gnostics, did not attain importance till Jerusalem was destroyed and most of the apostles had left this world. Now, if we duly consider all these circumstances, it will be even more incredible in regard to John's Gospel than any other that it should have been forged in his name. From his being the sole surviving apostle, innumerable eyes were upon him and his movements. He lived and labored in one of the chief cities of the known world, in which was a large church and the vicinity of which was wholly peopled with Christians. We have an epistle of *Pliny* a distinguished Roman officer of that region, written only a few years after the death of John the Evangelist, in which he describes the vast increase of the Christians in Asia Minor and lays before the emperor *Trajan* (the successor of the emperor in whose reign John's death took place,) measures for preventing the further extension of their tenets. Now, how was it possible that in this state of things a work could be forged in John's name? or, supposing even that one might have

been, (though history says nothing of any such imposition under the name of John,)* how is it conceivable that no opposition should have been made thereto, when many thousands were acquainted with John and must have known exactly what he wrote and what he did not? *Of such opposition, however, there is nowhere the slightest trace.* Not merely all teachers of the orthodox church in all parts of the wide Roman empire, but also all heretics of the most various sects, make use of the work as a sacred valuable legacy bequeathed to the church by the beloved disciple ; and the few heretics who make no use of it, as e. g. Marcion, still evince acquaintance with it, and regard it as a genuine work of John's, but are impudent enough to deny that John himself had a correct knowledge of the Gospel, because he was too much of a Jew. Whether, as was the case with the other Gospels, John's also was corrupted by the heretics, who felt that they were specially aimed at in it, is uncertain. The Gnostics, with the exception of Marcion (who, however, as has been already mentioned, is only improperly reckoned among the Gnostics), made most frequent use of John, as in their opinion specially favoring their spiritual ideas. We do not learn, however, that there existed in ancient times any Gospel of John corrupted by the

* There does exist in Ms., it is true, a second apocalypse under John's name ; but this production appears to belong to a much later period. There is also an apostolic history of older date, in which, however, John is only mentioned along with others ; it is not ascribed to him.

Gnostics, as Luke's Gospel was mutilated by Marcion. In modern times, it is true, a Gospel of John thus disfigured has come to public knowledge; but the alterations in it originated at a late period in the middle ages.

The doubts respecting the genuineness of John's Gospel which have, nevertheless, been proposed in recent times, took their rise, like those in regard to Matthew, solely from its *internal* character. When once doubts were thus occasioned, endeavors were made to sustain them on historical grounds likewise. These, however, are of little weight,* from the firmness of the foundation on which the Gospel rests. It was with John much as with Matthew in regard to those characteristics which excited doubt of the genuineness of the book. It was correctly remarked that John gives a different representation of our Lord from that presented by the first three Evangelists. In his Gospel Christ's actions and discourses appear, as it were, transfigured and spiritualized, while in the other Evangelists they appear in a costume more or less Jewish and national. Now, as it is not conceivable, it is said, that the same person should be so differently represented, and John, the beloved disciple of our Lord, would certainly not have portrayed his Master as other than he really was, while the description of the actions of Jesus, (who ap-

* The most weighty opponent of the genuineness of John has given the excellent example of publicly acknowledging that he has become convinced of the genuineness of this jewel of the church, and retracts his doubts. May this example find numerous imitators!

peared as a Jew, among Jews, and in behalf of Jews,) given in the accounts of the first three Evangelists is much more conformable to probability, the Gospel which bears John's name must be of later origin. But here, as in regard to Matthew, it may be observed, that from a perfectly correct remark false conclusions have been deduced. It is indeed true that John exhibits the Saviour in a far more spiritual and glorified character than the first three Evangelists. But this proves nothing except that John was the most spiritual of the Evangelists. The same individual may be regarded and described very differently by different persons. Of this truth we have a remarkable example in a great character of Grecian antiquity. *Socrates* is presented to our view in his actions and discourses by two of his confidential pupils, *Xenophon* and *Plato*. And how entirely different is the description given of him by these two writers! In fact, these biographers may be said to sustain very much such a mutual relation as that of John and the first Evangelists. While *Xenophon* paid attention principally to the external acts of *Socrates*, *Plato* describes his spiritual characteristics. Now, if it was possible to represent a common human being of eminence in two very different lights, without doing violence to truth, how much rather might it be so in regard to one who was greater than Solomon, or than *Socrates* and his biographers. He who lived a purely heavenly life on earth and spake words of eternal truth could not but be very variously described, according to the characteristics of the human soul which received the

rays of light proceeding from him. Each soul reflected his image according to its own profundity and compass, and yet each might be right. It was for this reason that more than one Gospel was included in the collection of the sacred writings, since only the presentation of different portraitures together could prevent a partial view of our Saviour's character. As it is only from connection of the accounts of Xenophon and Plato that we can obtain a complete picture of Socrates, so we cannot comprehend the life of our Lord, which affords so many different aspects, without uniting the peculiar traits scattered in all the four Gospels into one general portraiture. With all the difference of representation observable in the Evangelists, there are still resemblances and affinities enough to make it evident that they all had the same great personage in view. As John relates narratives of cures exactly like those in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so the Gospels of the latter contain passages, which in elevation, depth and richness of thought are not inferior to our Lord's discourses in John, and indeed resemble them in phraseology. Among these is the lofty and astonishingly beautiful passage, Matth. 11 : 25—30 : "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father : and no man knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son

will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” He, from whose mouth such language proceeded might certainly be represented in such an aspect as John has given to Jesus, if the description were undertaken by one in some measure capable of appreciating a character of this nature ; and that John was thus capable is sufficiently clear from his Epistles.

If, therefore, we look at the Gospels as a collection, or consider each separately, we cannot but say that they are more strongly accredited and sustained by external and internal proofs than any other work of antiquity. *Few* writings have such ancient testimonies in their favor, reaching back to the time of the authors ; *none* have so many of them, so totally distinct, so corroborative of each other. While, then, the chief argument in behalf of the Scriptures generally, and the Gospels in particular, is the *witness of the Holy Spirit*, perceived in his heart by every believer as he peruses the Scriptures (a point on which we shall enlarge at the close of our treatise), still the possibility of proving on historical grounds the genuineness and primitive character of the Gospels is a great additional cause of gratitude, inasmuch as it removes occasions of distrust, particularly from weak and doubting minds, and affords motives for the confirmation of their faith.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

ALONG with the collection of the Gospels there existed at an early period of the church, as was related above,* a collection of Paul's Epistles called the Apostle. In the lives of *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian* and *Clement* of Alexandria, who were all acquainted with and used it, this collection contained thirteen Epistles, viz., the Epistle to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, those to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, and those to Titus and Philemon. The Epistle to the Hebrews was not inserted in this collection, because opinions were not united as to its origin. (See Chap. VI. below.) Half a century before the time of the Fathers just mentioned we find a collection of Pauline Epistles in the hands of Marcion, that extravagant reverer of the apostle Paul. He was born in Asia Minor, where, as is well known, the apostle Paul had long lived and labored and was highly revered. Thence Marcion went to Rome, carrying with him the collection of Pauline Epistles which he had made use of in Asia. This, however, contained but ten Epistles; there were wanting the three commonly termed

* Comp. Chap. I.

pastoral letters, viz., the two to Timothy, and that to Titus ; called *pastoral* letters because in them Paul gives directions to spiritual pastors in regard to the suitable performance of their official duties. The small Epistle to Philemon was known to him, because it stood in close connexion with the Epistle to the Colossians ; but the three pastoral letters seem to have been diffused but slowly, as independent private productions, and hence, also, not to have been inserted in the original collection. How the collection of the Pauline Epistles, in the form in which we now have it, originated, is unknown, and has not yet been satisfactorily accounted for by any conjecture.* For the supposition that, like the collection of the Gospels, it originated in different places at once, merely by the gradual transmission thither of the Epistles of Paul as fast as they were composed, is forbidden by the circumstance that, as can be proved, they are not arranged in the order of their composition. The collection cannot, however, have been accidentally formed ; for it is clear that a certain plan has been followed. At the beginning are placed the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians, distinguished for their length and internal importance ; then follows a letter to several churches

* We find very few traces of a different arrangement of the Epistles of Paul ; a different one, however, is followed in an old catalogue of the books of the New Testament, probably pertaining to the church at Rome. It is called *Muratorius*'s Catalogue, from an Italian abbot of that name who discovered the Mss. which contained it.

in a whole province, the Epistle to the Galatians ; then the smaller Epistles to churches in particular cities, to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians ; lastly come the Epistles to private persons. Moreover, had the collection of them been left to accident, sometimes one arrangement would have been adopted and sometimes another, which is not the case, the order having been the same that we now observe, as far back as the second century. As, therefore, the order of the Epistles was evidently the work of design, and its general reception throughout the church indicates that it proceeded from some authoritative source, the most reasonable supposition is, that the apostle Paul himself made the collection. During the second imprisonment at Rome to which, as we shall see hereafter, it is highly probable that the apostle was subjected, he may have collected together the ten Epistles, as being the principal ones of a doctrinal nature which he had as yet written, in order to bequeath them as a legacy to the church. It was in this original form that Marcion possessed the collection.* After the collection was made up, near the close of his life, Paul wrote the three pastoral letters, which were afterwards added to the original collection and naturally placed last. By

* According to the account of *Epiphanius*, it is true, the order of the ten Epistles in Marcion's Canon was different from that in ours ; viz. Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians. If this statement be credited, it must be allowed that Marcion's collection originated independently of ours.

accident Marcion had not become acquainted with these letters, and therefore retained the most ancient form of the collection of Paul's Epistles. A very weighty testimony in favor of this view is presented in the second Epistle of the apostle Peter, who, at near the conclusion of his letter, says: "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul, also, according to the wisdom given unto him *hath written unto you; as also in all (his) Epistles, speaking in them of these things*; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest," etc. (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16.) According to the first Epistle of Peter (1: 1. Comp. 2 Pet. 3: 1.), Peter wrote to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, and other provinces of Asia Minor, to which also Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians are directed. Peter, therefore, might presume that his readers were acquainted with these. The expression, *all (his) Epistles*, however, clearly indicates a collection of Epistles. Otherwise, there is something of indefiniteness in it. Paul no doubt wrote more Epistles during his life than we now possess. But most of his Epistles were not exactly adapted for general diffusion. The expression *all (his) Epistles*, must therefore have reference to a collection of the apostle's letters, which could be read through. If it be also considered that Peter was in Paul's company at Rome, and that consequently he would naturally have had acquaintance with the collection of his Epistles, it will be plain that this passage is hardly intelli-

ble except on the supposition that a collection of Paul's Epistles was already in existence.* It is true the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter is now disputed, and certainly much that is of an imposing nature can be alleged against it. Still, however, all that can be said does not, I am convinced, demonstrate its spuriousness, while there is certainly much evidence of its genuineness. At any rate, this mention of a collection of Paul's Epistles should not be urged against the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter, as all acknowledge that nothing certain is known in regard to the formation of this collection. But on these points we will speak more at large hereafter.

If it be admitted, however, that Paul himself made

* Some may think that too much is inferred by the author from Peter's expression ; and indeed it must be admitted that to say that Peter's language is hardly intelligible except on the supposition of an existing collection of Paul's Epistles is somewhat extravagant. Our English translation, by inserting the word *his* in the phraseology of Peter, has somewhat modified the sense of the original and weakened the force of Olshausen's remarks. The Greek expression is : *ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς* ; i. e., perhaps, in all *the* Epistles. Now, though it would give an intelligible sense to these words to suppose that Peter meant to make his observation concerning Paul's Epistles generally, of which he presumed, some might, and some might not, have come to the knowledge of those to whom he wrote ; still it can hardly be disputed that his phraseology becomes much more natural if we suppose a current collection of the Epistles. TR.

the collection of his Epistles, or at least, caused it to be made at Rome under his direction, we have then an explanation of the fact, that in regard to the genuineness of this collection, as in regard to that of the Gospels, *not the slightest doubt was ever expressed*. Members of the Catholic church in all parts of the world, as also of the various sects, make use of the collection and of the individual Epistles without allowing themselves to intimate the smallest doubt in regard to them. Now this undeniable fact is wholly irreconcilable with the supposition that all or any Epistles in the collection are spurious. Indeed, the first supposition, that all the Epistles of Paul are spurious, has never been maintained, and never can be, except in despite of all history. But even the idea that one or two spurious, forged Epistles may have obtained a place in the collection, is hardly to be reconciled with the universal acknowledgement of all the Epistles in the church of ancient times. Consider only, how universally Paul was known in the early church! From Spain (which in all probability he visited,) he had travelled about through Italy and all Greece to the remotest countries of Asia Minor, Syria, and Arabia; he had resided for years in some of the large cities of the then known world, in Rome, Corinth, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Antioch, Cæsarea, Jerusalem; he had everywhere founded numerous churches and maintained the most active intercourse with them. How, then, when he was so well known, could a work be forged in his name with any prospect of its being generally acknowledged.

The impossibility of this occurrence is the more evident from the fact that all Paul's Epistles are addressed to important churches or to persons living in well-known places. If those who received the Epistles were not always designated, then it might be supposed that some spurious ones obtained general circulation. No one, perhaps, could then say with certainty, whether Paul wrote such a particular Epistle or not; for it is not conceivable that Paul should at once have told every body he knew how many Epistles he had written; and thus one might be personally acquainted with Paul and still be deceived by an artfully-contrived Epistle. But take the case as it is. Were the Epistle to the Ephesians, against which, as we shall see, objections have been raised, really spurious, forged in Paul's name, we readily admit that it might have been received as genuine in the whole church beside, for it is as like Paul's Epistles as one egg is like another; but could it have been acknowledged as genuine in Ephesus itself and the Asiatic churches connected with the Ephesians? Can we suppose that the Ephesians had so little regard for the great founder of their church, that they did not even know whether their beloved preacher had or had not written them a letter while in bonds? And can they have been so totally wanting in sensibility to friendship and love as not to preserve the apostle's communication when every man at all susceptible of emotions of friendship is anxious to preserve what has been traced by a beloved hand? It is hence plain that a spurious Epistle to the Ephesians must have been

known in Ephesus as what it really was, a forged production; and it is impossible to suppose that if the Epistle had been disputed by any considerable church, and particularly by the very one to which it purported to have been sent, the opposition should have been so completely suppressed. The declaration of the Ephesian church that they had received no such Epistle, that they had not the original in their archives, would have been sufficient to destroy its credit.

To this it is to be added, that all the Epistles of Paul go beyond general expressions, such as may be easily invented; that they exhibit a definite concrete* purport, which has reference to the particular wants of each church and its manifestations as to christian life. Such representations of actual facts in regard to the ancient churches can have proceeded only from immediate contact with them, and consequently certify us of the genuineness of the Pauline Epistles. With all that is of a special nature, however, in each particular Epistle of Paul, there is observable in all together a uniformity of style and a unity in doctrinal ideas which wholly prevents suspicion respecting the genuineness of the epistolary collection. For the usual reason of forging writings in the name of another is, that the

* This term, in the sense in which it is here used, is borrowed from logic. In that science, it is known, abstract and concrete terms are contra-distinguished. An abstract term is one signifying some attribute without reference to any particular subject; a concrete term designates both the attribute and the subject to which it belongs. TR.

forger wishes to give currency to a favorite idea under some celebrated name. In no Epistle, however, is there any prominent idea which is remote from the circle of Pauline doctrine, and seems to be a foreign idea clothed with the costume of Paul's style. We rather find every where the same main thoughts, which actuated the life of Paul, running through the entire collection and giving their stamp to the whole.

The principal evidence, however, of the genuineness of the Pauline Epistles, regarded in a historical light, is the circumstance that we can assign to the Epistles their exact places in the life of the apostle Paul by following the Acts of the Apostles. Thus are they most fully and firmly bound one to another, and all to the Acts of the Apostles. This arrangement of the individual Epistles in accordance with the thread of Paul's life is effected in such a manner as to show in chronological order the occasions of their composition and their strict relations to his known movements.

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, who, as is well known, was at first named Saul, was a native Jew of the tribe of Benjamin and was born in Tarsus in Cilicia. In order to perfect himself in the knowledge of the law of his native country, he early betook himself to Jerusalem, where he was taught by the celebrated Gamaliel. His zeal for the hereditary observances of his countrymen caused him to persecute the Christians, as soon as he obtained knowledge of them, with all the vehemence of his fiery nature. At the death of Ste-

phen, the first Christian martyr, he was busy keeping the clothes of his murderers while they stoned him. (Acts 7: 57 seq.) From Jerusalem Paul betook himself to Damascus, to stir up the Jews there also against the Christians; but the Lord Jesus appeared to him before the city in his divine glory, and showed him who it was that he persecuted. (Acts 9: 22, 26.) As Paul had not persecuted the Christians from intentional wickedness, or from carnal selfishness, contrary to his interior conviction, but rather with the honest idea that he was thereby doing God service, the divine light which enlightened his dark mind by this vision at once produced an entire change in his feelings. With the same ardent zeal for truth and right which he had manifested in persecuting the Gospel he now defended it; though his zeal was indeed purified and made holier by the Spirit of the Lord. After a season of quiet reflection and repose such as he needed to perceive the greatness of that internal change which he had undergone and the depth of the new principle of life within him, Paul began to make known the conviction he had just obtained. It was in Antioch (about 44 A. D.) that Paul began formally to preach; and he taught in this city, along with Barnabas, a whole year. After a journey to Jerusalem, whither he carried money that had been collected for the poor in that city, the elders of the church at Antioch designated him as a messenger to the Gentiles; and he with Barnabas set out on *the first missionary expedition*, about 45 A. D. It extended no further than the neighboring countries of

Asia Minor. Paul travelled through Cyprus to Perga in Pamphylia and Antioch in Pisidia, and returned through Lystra, Derbe, and Attalia by sea to Antioch. Consequently, on this first missionary enterprise the apostle did not visit any of the cities or provinces to which he wrote Epistles. On his return to Antioch he found that some strict Jewish Christians had come thither from Jerusalem and excited dissensions. Paul had begun to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and in such a way as to dispense with the observance of the Mosaic law as a necessary duty. Many Jewish Christians could not rise to the level of this evangelical freedom in regard to the external law. Even Peter at first adhered so strenuously to the forms of Jewish practice that nothing but a vision could bring him to see that under the New Testament the Mosaic law in regard to meats had lost its external importance. (Acts 10: 11 seq.) In order to come to a fixed decision on this important point, the church at Antioch determined that Paul and Barnabas, with several companions should proceed to Jerusalem to present this question before the Apostles. They there declared what God had wrought by them among the Gentiles; Peter testified the same in regard to his labors; and James, the brother of our Lord, showed that it was foretold in the prophecies of Scripture that the Gentiles likewise should be called into the church of God. On these grounds the apostles, with the elders and all the church at Jerusalem determined to send deputies to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and communicated their judgment

in a letter carried by them to the church at Antioch. This important transaction at Jerusalem, which publicly announced the character of Christianity as an universal religion, is called the *council of the Apostles*. It was held about the year 52 A. D. The decision of this apostolic body was of the utmost consequence to the apostle Paul, as in his subsequent labors he had to contend constantly with narrow-minded Jewish Christians, who wished to impose the Mosaic law upon the Gentiles also as essential to salvation. Against these Paul now advanced not only his own personal influence but the authority of all the apostles. This at least, was effected thereby—that the supporters of the ceremonial law and its perpetual validity were compelled to secede from the universal apostolic church and form themselves into a distinct sect. It is true, however, that their opposition to the apostle Paul was continued with extreme obstinacy; and we find in his Epistles numberless allusions to the persecutions which he encountered at their hand.

Soon after the apostolic council (53 A. D.) Paul undertook his *second* great journey. He separated from Barnabas, who united with his kinsman Mark in preaching the Gospel. Paul took Silas as his companion instead of Barnabas. He directed his course first to the churches founded on his previous journey; and thence onward to *Galatia*, and to Troas on the western coast of Asia Minor. Thence the Lord conducted him by a vision in a dream into Macedonia, where he founded the church of *Philippi*; and then went to *Thessalon-*

ica. (Acts 10 : 10 seq. 17: 1 seq.) Unfortunately, Paul could remain only about three weeks in the latter city, for, as he met with much success among the proselytes that had connected themselves with the Jewish synagogues, there arose an uproar against him among the Jews, who actually compelled him to leave the city and flee to Beræa. (Acts 17: 10.) As, however, the Jews in this place likewise vented their rage against the apostle of our Lord, Paul betook himself to Athens, where also some hearts were warmed by the fire of his preaching. He next proceeded onward to *Corinth*. Here, in one of the great cities of antiquity, where luxury and debauchery had reached their highest pitch, but where on that very account a strong desire for salvation was readily excited, Paul labored with remarkable success for more than a year and a half. He found there a Jewish family from Rome, *Aquila* and his wife *Priscilla*, celebrated in the history of the ancient church. As Aquila pursued the same craft with Paul, the latter lived and wrought with him, and besides discoursed in the house of a certain Justus. From hence Paul wrote the first Epistles among those still preserved to us, viz. the two Epistles to the *Thessalonians*. Now, if we compare the tenor of the Epistles with the situation of the apostle and their relation to the church at Thessalonica, we shall find them throughout conformable to the circumstances. As Paul was unable to preach in Thessalonica more than three weeks, he must naturally have been very anxious respecting the fate of those who believed in that city ; he feared that they might

again fall away on account of the persecutions which threatened them. Hence his apprehensions had already induced him, as soon as he arrived at Athens, to send Timothy from thence to Thessalonica, in order to learn what was really the condition of the church. Timothy rejoined him at Corinth ; and, his mind being set at rest by the information which Timothy communicated, he wrote the first Epistle, for the purpose of confirming and establishing the Thessalonians in the faith to which they had so faithfully adhered. (Acts 17: 15. 18: 5. 1 Thess. 3: 2, 5, 6.) It is a circumstance entirely consonant with what we must suppose to have been the situation of the Christians in Thessalonica, that they did not rightly comprehend the doctrine of our Lord's resurrection. This would naturally be the case, from the shortness of the period during which they enjoyed the apostle's instructions. (1 Thess. 4: 13 seq.) They feared that those believers who might die before the coming of our Lord, would be shut out from the joys attendant on the Messiah's reign upon earth. The apostle, however, sets them right in regard to their fear, showing them that there would be a two-fold resurrection. Those who had fallen asleep in faith respecting the Saviour would not rest till the general resurrection, but would be raised up at the coming of Christ and would behold the Lord with those who were alive. This same subject also soon afterward caused the apostle Paul to write the *second Epistle* to the Christians at Thessalonica, also from Corinth. The explanation of Paul had indeed quieted the ap-

prehension of the believers of that city in regard to those of their number who met with an early death ; but some expressions used by Paul in his first Epistle (particularly 1 Thess. 4 : 17), together with false rumors respecting his view of the proximity of our Lord's coming, had led some susceptible minds to the idea that this important event not only *might*, but *must*, take place very soon. Thus they openly designated the period of our Lord's return, in total contrariety to Paul's meaning, who did indeed, with them, hope and ardently desire that our Lord might come in their time, and by no means stated expressly that he would not do so, since that would have been a negative determination of the point ; but maintained the *possibility* that he would, and founded thereon, after the example of Christ himself, an exhortation to constant watchfulness. In order, therefore, to moderate the excessive disposition of the Christians at Thessalonica to look upon this great event as *necessarily* about to take place in their own time, Paul presented to view certain things which must all take place before it. From the consideration of these points it could not but be evident to the Thessalonians that this event could not take place so suddenly as they anticipated, and thus their excited minds would probably be quieted. In these respects, as regards the state of things at that time, the two Epistles possess entire and undeniable historical keeping ; and we shall not err widely from the truth if we assign their composition to the years 54 and 55 of the Christian era.

From Corinth the apostle Paul now returned to Antioch, whence he had been sent. (Acts 18: 22.) Without, however, remaining long at rest, he in the following year (57 A. D.) entered upon his *third missionary tour*, going first to Galatia again, where he had preached on his second tour, and then to the wealthy and celebrated city of *Ephesus*, where he abode more than two years. From this city Paul wrote first to the *Galatians*, and subsequently to the *Corinthians*. The Epistle to the Galatians was occasioned by those same Jewish Christians, of whom we have before remarked, that they constantly strove to cast hindrances in the way of Paul's operations. The Galatian churches, which Paul, on his second visit to Galatia (Gal. 4: 13), had found walking in the true faith, had been misled by these men in regard to the requirements of religion. Through the idea that the observance of the Jewish ceremonial law was essential to salvation, the Galatian Christians were led to regard circumcision, the solemnization of the Sabbath and of the Jewish feasts, and other ordinances of the Old Testament, which the New Testament valued only from their spiritual signification, as of worth in an external view, and in this way suffered themselves to lose sight of the interior life of faith. The object of the apostle, therefore, in his Epistle, was to develop thoroughly to the Galatians the relation between the law and the gospel, and to show that, in the spiritual freedom conferred by the latter, the external rites of the former might, indeed, be observed, but that they must be observed in

a higher manner, i. e. spiritually. Previously, however, he makes some remarks respecting himself personally. For, as the Jewish Christians presumed to dispute Paul's apostolic authority, he found himself compelled to vindicate it by a historical account of himself. He states (1: 12 seq.) that he did not receive his Gospel from man, but immediately from God ; that at first he had persecuted the church of God, but that God, who had called him from his mother's womb, had been pleased to reveal his Son in him, that he might preach him to the heathen, through the Gospel. This evidently refers to the event of our Lord's appearance to Paul near Damascus, on which occasion the Lord said to him : "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet : for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee ; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts 26: 15—18.) This reference to so peculiar occurrences in Paul's life exhibits a sufficient security for the genuineness of this Epistle, and, in connection with its entire contents, as also with its style, has sufficed to place it forever beyond suspicion.

An occasion equally sad in respect to the apostle

gave rise to the *first Epistle to the Corinthians*, which was likewise written from Ephesus. Before the first of the Epistles which are in our possession, Paul had written another to Corinth (1 Cor. 5: 9), which, however, has perished. We have indeed a *pretended* Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, which claims to be this lost Epistle, but a slight examination is sufficient to manifest its spuriousness. Moreover this Epistle of Paul was regarded as lost by all Christian antiquity. This first Epistle, as is shown by 1 Cor. 5: 1—9, was occasioned by the circumstance that an individual in the Corinthian church had matrimonial intercourse with his mother-in-law, the wife of his deceased father. Paul pointed out to the church the necessity of excluding from among them him who sustained this incestuous relation, that he might be awakened to penitence. To this Epistle of Paul the Corinthian Christians replied in such a way, as to show plainly that they misunderstood some parts of it, particularly what Paul had said respecting the avoidance of lasciviousness. These misapprehensions are corrected by Paul in the *first* of the two Epistles which have been preserved to us. He likewise speaks in this same letter of another important circumstance in regard to the Corinthian church, which presents considerable coincidence with the situation of the Christians in Galatia. It is that some of the Jewish Christians, who had excited dissensions among the believers there, had come to Corinth also. True, some had remained faithful to Paul; but others appealed, in contradiction of his authority, to Peter

(Cephas), although he agreed perfectly with Paul in his views respecting the law. They probably objected to the apostle Paul, as did the Jewish Christians in Galatia, that he had not, like Peter, known our Lord personally. Besides these two parties Paul mentions two others (1 Cor. 1: 12), the distinctive characteristics of which, however, are uncertain. There were, therefore, divisions in the Corinthian church, and from these had proceeded manifold disorders. Paul's first Epistle is occupied with the reconciliation of the former and the removal of the latter.

Our first Epistle to the Corinthians comprises such an abundance of peculiar circumstances entirely conformable with the situation of the church in its earliest days, that we cannot for a moment suppose it possible that it is a forgery. Moreover, particular facts mentioned in it coincide most exactly with the events of Paul's life as known from the Acts of the Apostles. Thus, according to Acts 19: 22, he sent away his two companions Timothy and Erastus from Ephesus a short time before he himself left the city ; and, according to 1 Cor. 4: 17, likewise, he had despatched Timothy to the Corinthians. According to the same passage in the Acts, Paul purposed soon to leave Ephesus and travel through Achaia (this was the Greek province in which Corinth was situated), to Jerusalem, and the same thing is indicated by 1 Cor. 16: 5. Thus all circumstances unite to give a sure historical basis to the Epistle. As its composition must be placed a little before Paul's departure from Ephesus, it was prob-

ably written about 59 A. D., while the Epistle to the Galatians may have been written about the year 58 A. D.

Before the apostle Paul left Ephesus, then, he sent Titus with a special commission to Corinth. He hoped to be able to wait for him in Ephesus, in order to receive an account of the troubled state of affairs in the Corinthian church, and of the reception which his Epistle encountered. But a sudden uproar created by Demetrius the silver-smith (Acts 19: 24 seq.), who saw himself injured in respect to the gains which he derived from the sale of small silver models of the celebrated temple of Diana at Ephesus, compelled him to leave the city earlier than he wished. In Macedonia, however, whither Paul immediately betook himself, he again met with Titus, who then informed him particularly of the condition of the church at Corinth and the impression which his Epistle had produced. This account induced the apostle to write the *second Epistle to the Corinthians*, from Macedonia. The contents of this other Epistle, which was written a few months after the first, bear so close a relation to the contents of the first, that the identity of the author is, thereby alone, made sufficiently evident. In the second chapter, e. g., we find mention again of the incestuous person, whom Paul had enjoined it upon the church to exclude from communion with them. As he had now been excommunicated, Paul speaks in his behalf, that he might not sink into utter despondency (2 Cor. 2: 7). Of most importance, however, are the particular expressions in

regard to those Jewish Christians who desolated the Corinthian church as well as others. Titus had informed the apostle with what an arrogant disposition they had received his letter. Against these, therefore, he expresses himself with the utmost severity, while he treats those who remained faithful to the truth with suavity and great kindness. In rebuking the perversity of these Judaizers, he feels it necessary to speak of himself; for these proud sectaries not only rejected the apostolic authority of Paul, but also sought by their calumnies to deprive him of the honor of being the most successful laborer in our Lord's vineyard. With noble plainness, therefore, Paul boasts of all that the Lord had done for him and through him; and the further removed this plainness was from false humility, and the less he avoided giving ground for the imputation of *appearing* arrogant and self-conceited, the more likely was his account of himself to make an impression upon all his opponents. We do not know definitely what effect this Epistle produced upon the state of things at Corinth; but, from the subsequent flourishing condition of the Corinthian church, we may with great probability infer that Paul's Epistle contributed essentially to the annihilation of divisions. At all events, the Epistle is so completely Pauline, and harmonizes so exactly with all known historical circumstances, that its genuineness has never been contested either in ancient or modern times.

What was not effected by the Epistle of Paul to the church of Corinth, was undoubtedly accomplished by

the apostle's personal presence in this metropolis. For, from Macedonia Paul went to Achaia (Acts 20: 3), and abode there three months. The greater part of this time he certainly spent in Corinth, and from hence he wrote the *Epistle to the Romans*, shortly before his departure from Corinth for Jerusalem in order to carry a collection of alms for the poor of that city (Acts 24: 17 seq. Rom. 15: 25, 26). This important Epistle (viz. that to the Romans), bears the stamp of a genuine apostolic letter so completely in both thought and language, that neither ancient nor modern times have advanced a single doubt as to its origin. The particular doctrine which Paul presented to view more frequently and more prominently than any other apostle, viz. that man is saved by faith in him who was crucified and rose again, and not by the works of the law, either ceremonial or moral, forms the central topic of the Epistle to the Romans; and, moreover, all the historical allusions which occur in it are entirely suitable to the circumstances under which it was written. Paul, e. g., according to this Epistle (Rom. 1: 12. 15: 23 seq.) had not yet been in Rome when he wrote it; and this agrees exactly with the statement of the apostle in Acts 19: 21. The many persons whom he salutes at the end of the Epistle, he became acquainted with from his numerous travels in Asia Minor and Greece; for, as there was a general conflux to Rome from all quarters, and also a general dispersion thence, it being the centre of the world, there was no city in which Romans did not reside, or of whose inhabitants

many were not constrained by circumstances to journey to Rome or to establish themselves there as residents. On account of this importance of the city of Rome, which must necessarily have been communicated to the church in that place, there is sufficient proof of the genuineness of this Epistle in the single circumstance that this church, in which Paul afterwards abode some years, never contradicted the universal opinion that Paul wrote this Epistle to them, but rather rejoiced in being honored with such an apostolic communication.

Hitherto we have seen the celebrated apostle of the Gentiles constantly laboring with freedom and boldness ; but his departure from Corinth brought upon him a long and cruel imprisonment. For Paul immediately returned from Corinth to Macedonia, embarked there at Philippi (Acts 20 : 3 seq.), and sailed along the coast of Asia Minor. At Miletus he called to him the elders of the church of Ephesus (Acts 20: 17 seq.) and took pathetic leave of them ; for he was persuaded that he should never again see these beloved brethren (20 : 38). About the year 60 A. D. the apostle arrived at Jerusalem, having passed through Cæsarea ; but was there immediately arrested (Acts xxii.) and carried back to Cæsarea (Acts 23: 31 seq.) Here he was indeed examined by the pro-consul Felix ; but, as he could not pronounce sentence against him and hesitated to release him, Paul remained two years in captivity. At the end of that time there came another

pro-consul, Porcius Festus, to Cæsarea. He commenced the examination anew, but when the apostle, as a Roman citizen, appealed to Cæsar, he sent him to Rome. This was about 62 A. D. On the voyage thither, Paul, together with the Roman soldiers who accompanied him, suffered shipwreck and they were compelled to pass the winter on the island of Malta. Paul did not, therefore, arrive at Rome before the commencement of the following year, and was there again kept as a prisoner for two years, i. e. till 65 A. D., before his case was decided. Still his confinement at Rome was not so strict as that at Cæsarea. He was permitted to hire a dwelling in the city, to go about, speak, and write as he pleased; only he was always accompanied by a soldier. Luke alone details all these events in the last chapters of the Acts, with very great minuteness. From Paul's Epistles we learn nothing respecting this period; for Paul seems not to have written at all from Cæsarea. Probably the strict duration in which he was held did not permit any communication by writing. In the providence of God, this long confinement may have served to acquaint Paul with himself, with the depths of his own interior being. For, the manner of life which Paul led and was obliged to lead, the perpetual bustle of travel, his constant efforts in regard to others, might have injured him by dissipation of his thoughts, and might, so to speak, have exhausted the fulness of his spirit, had he not possessed some quiet seasons in which, while his

attention was turned wholly upon himself, he might be spiritually replenished and invigorated for future seasons of intense outward exertion.

But from the other of the two places where Paul was compelled to remain a prisoner for a long period, i. e. Rome, he certainly wrote several Epistles, viz. *the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*. Still, although in these Epistles mention is made of some historical particulars, he supposes the occurrences in regard to himself to be generally known among the Christians of the churches in Macedonia and Asia Minor, and therefore does not enter into details respecting them. Unfortunately Luke closed his book of Acts at the point when Paul had lived two years as a prisoner at Rome ; and therefore in further designating the historical connection of Paul's Epistles we are not able to state the circumstances of time and place with so much precision and certainty as hitherto. This circumstance, likewise, explains how, in such a state of things the remaining Epistles of Paul afford more room to doubt of their genuineness than was the case in regard to those which, we see, well and easily fall into the history of Paul as related in the Acts. We shall therefore devote separate consideration to these Epistles.

CHAPTER V.

CONTINUATION. OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES COMPOSED DURING AND AFTER PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AT ROME.

OF the Epistles composed by Paul during his imprisonment at Rome, the Epistles to the *Philippians*, *Colossians* and *Philemon* can be easily shown with sufficient certainty to be genuine writings of the Apostle. First, as to the Epistle to the *Philippians*, Paul clearly represents himself therein, not only as a prisoner, but also as a prisoner at Rome; for he speaks of the barracks occupied by the imperial guards (the *Praetorium*: Luther translates the word by *Richt-haus*, or hall of justice, Phil. 1: 13), into which the fame of his imprisonment had extended itself. Probably Paul had won over to the Gospel the soldiers set to guard him, to whom he was wont to preach, and, through these, others in the camp may have been converted. Even the imperial palace itself is mentioned by Paul (Phil. 4: 22) as having been already penetrated by the seeds of the word of God. These clear allusions leave not the slightest doubt that the Epistle was written from Rome. Nor can any doubt remain as to the question whether it was really written to the inhabitants of the Macedonian city *Philippi*. For, according to Acts

16: 12 seq., the apostle's labors in this city had been particularly blest. The Lord at once opened the heart of Lydia, so that she believed the preaching of Paul. An unfortunate occurrence respecting a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, which the apostle expelled, constrained him to leave the city. The church at Philippi, however, always preserved a particular attachment to the apostle Paul, and his acknowledgment of this fact runs through the whole of his letter to them. The apostle calls them his brethren dearly beloved and longed for, his joy and crown (Phil. 4: 1), and thanks the Philippian Christians that they so faithfully had respect to his bodily necessities (Phil. 4: 15, 16). These characteristics are decisive in favor of the genuineness of the Epistle, which, moreover, has not been contested either in ancient or modern times.

The case is the same in regard to the *Epistle to the Colossians*. This church was not founded by Paul in person ; as he himself indicates in Col. 2: 1. He had indeed been in Phrygia, but had not visited the city of Colosse on his journey through this province of Asia Minor. Paul nevertheless wrote to them, as also to the Romans, in part from universal christian love, which called upon him to acknowledge the members of every church of Christ as brethren, and in part from the special reason, that the Gospel had been carried to Colosse by disciples of his, particularly *Epaphras*. The immediate occasion of his Epistle, however, was, that heretics threatened to draw away the church from the true faith. These individuals were not of the or-

dinary Judaizing class; along with much that was Jewish they had some Gnostic characteristics. Now Phrygia is the precise spot where, from the earliest times downward, we find a prevalent tendency to a fantastic apprehension of religion. Thus the circumstance, that according to Paul's representation men of this stamp had gained influence in Colosse, suits perfectly well with what we know of that city. Nor is it otherwise than very natural, that few particular allusions occur in the Epistle, as he was not personally known to the church. He however mentions his imprisonment, and sends salutations also from some persons of their acquaintance who were in his vicinity, among others from Aristarchus (Col. 4: 10), who, as we learn from the Acts, had come to Rome with Paul and Luke (27: 1). The latter companion of Paul likewise salutes the believers in Phrygia (4: 14). Of individuals themselves resident in Colosse he saluted especially *Archippus* (4: 17) who occupied some ministry in the church. Concerning this man, as also concerning *Onesimus*, whom Paul mentions (Col. 4: 9), we gain more particular information from the Epistle to Philemon. In this Epistle to the Colossians, likewise, every thing harmonizes so exactly with Paul's circumstances in general and his relation to the church which he addressed in particular, that no one has ever been led to question its genuineness, either in ancient or modern days.

With the same entire unanimity has the genuineness of Paul's *Epistle to Philemon*, likewise, been always admitted. This delightful little Epistle so clearly ex-

hibits all the characteristics of the great apostle, and is so utterly free from every thing which would make it probable that any person could have a motive in forging it, that no one would ever entertain the idea of denying that Paul was its author. Philemon, to whom the Epistle is addressed, probably lived in Colosse, for that Archippus, who held an office in the church at Colosse, appears here as his son, and Appia as his wife (Phil. v. 2). Probably Philemon was an opulent man; for he had so spacious a house that it accommodated the assemblies of believers. Paul wrote this Epistle, likewise, in confinement (v. 13), and sends salutations from all those who, according to the Acts and the Epistle to the Colossians, were in his vicinity (v. 23, 24). Onesimus, who had fled from the relation of bondage which he had sustained towards Philemon in Colosse, Paul sends back to his master, whom he informs that his slave had been led by him to obey the Gospel; so that Philemon is to receive back again as a brother him whom he had lost as a slave. The whole of this small Epistle comprises, indeed, no important doctrinal contents; but it is an exhibition of interior, deep feeling, and delicate regard to circumstances on the part of the apostle, and as such has always been very dear and valuable to the church.

In regard to the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, however, the case is totally different from what it is in regard to the three other Epistles sent from Rome. There are so many remarkable circumstances in relation to this Epistle, that we can easily comprehend how its genu-

ineness has been often brought in question. Still, all the doubts which may have been excited are completely removed on a closer examination, so that it can by no means be denied that the Epistle was written by the apostle, even if its actual destination to Ephesus cannot be established.

If it be considered that Paul, as we saw above in the historical account of the apostle's life, was twice in Ephesus, and that once he even resided there for about three years, it must certainly appear very strange that, in an Epistle to this church, of the elders of which Paul had taken leave in so pathetic a manner (Acts 20: 17), there should be found no salutations. In writing to the Romans, Paul, though he had never been at Rome, sent salutations to so many persons, that their names fill an entire chapter ; while in this Epistle not a single person is greeted. Moreover, there are no personal and confidential allusions in any part of the Epistle. Paul appears only in the general relation of a christian teacher and a friend to his readers. There is certainly something extremely strange in this character of the Epistle, particularly, moreover, as that which we should especially expect to find in the Epistle, viz. allusion to heretics, against which Paul had so expressly warned the Ephesian Elders, is entirely wanting (Acts 20 : 29 seq.)

The difficulties are increased, when we know what was the case originally concerning the address to the readers of the Epistle (Eph. 1: 1). Instead of "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the

saints which are at *Ephesus*," as it stands in most copies, Marcion, in his Ms., read : " to the saints at *Laodicea*." In other Mss. there was no name at all, neither Ephesus, nor Laodicea ; and in these the inscription of the Epistle ran thus : " Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which dwell at ———." Instead of the name was a vacant space, which however was often neglected by the copyists, who thus perplexed the matter still further.

In addition to all this, if the Epistle to the Ephesians be compared with that to the Colossians, we shall find the same fundamental thought, and often even the same train of ideas ; only the first is more minute and expanded, while in the Epistle to the Colossians the thoughts are more concisely and briefly presented. On account of this relative character it has been declared, that the Epistle to the Ephesians is probably only an enlargement of the Epistle to the Colossians, made with a special design by some other hand. But, though for a moment such a supposition might not appear altogether unfounded, its plausibility is completely dissipated, when the peculiar character of the Epistle is made apparent by a right and thorough notion of its origin. The Epistle to the Ephesians is undoubtedly what is termed a circular letter, directed not to a single church but to many at once. In such a letter, therefore, there could be no personal allusions, because what might interest one circle of readers might be unintelligible to another. In this Epistle, therefore, Paul adheres exclusively to generalities, and touches only on

such topics as would be of interest to all members of the churches for whom the Epistle was intended. Now, on the supposition that Ephesus and Laodicea were of the number of those churches for which the Epistle was intended, nothing is more easy of explanation than the fact, that the name of the former was in the inscription of some Mss. and the name of the latter in that of others. The messenger who carried the apostolic letter may have taken several copies with him in which the space for the name of the place was not filled out and remained thus until they were delivered, when the name of the church which received any particular one was added to it. The diffusion of the Epistle abroad was mainly from the capital city Ephesus ; and hence the name Ephesus got into the inscription of most of the Mss. Marcion, however, came into possession of a transcript from the copy which was delivered at Laodicea, and for this reason he read Laodicea instead of Ephesus in the inscription. In some copies there may have been a total neglect to fill up the spaces left vacant for the names ; and in this way some Mss. got into circulation in which no city was designated.

It is seen how satisfactorily and completely, on this single supposition, that the Epistle to the Ephesians was a circular letter, our difficulties disappear at once. It is true the striking resemblance of the Epistle to that to the Colossians still remains ; and in recent times the greatest stress has been laid on this very point. Both Epistles have essentially the same contents ; only the Epistle to the Ephesians is more full and minute, as

has been already remarked. But let it be considered that the two Epistles were written not only about the same time, but under entirely similar circumstances. Is it then to be wondered at, that there is a striking similarity in contents and arrangement? What purpose could there have been in forging or counterfeiting an Epistle, in which the fraudulent author said the same things which were contained in a genuine Epistle of the man to whom he wished that his production should be ascribed? It is therefore clear that there is nothing in this resemblance of the Epistle to the Ephesians to that to the Colossians, which can justify us in inferring the spuriousness of either. For, whether we suppose that the longest (that to the Ephesians), was written first, and that Paul afterwards repeated the same thoughts in the shortest (that to the Colossians), or, *vice versâ*, that he wrote the shortest first, and afterwards felt himself called upon to state the same ideas more at length in the other, there is not the least harm done by their similarity to each other, particularly as the Epistle to the Ephesians contains many ideas wholly peculiar to the apostle Paul, which are wanting in the Epistle to the Colossians, and this, too, in his own phraseology and style.

It is to be observed further, that Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians mentions a letter to the church at Laodicea, and charges the former to communicate their Epistle to the believers in Laodicea, and in return to request the Epistle addressed to them. Now because, as we have seen, Marcion regarded the Epistle to the

Ephesians as having been directed to the Laodiceans, it has been supposed that our Epistle to the Ephesians was the one meant by Paul. But, plausible as this may appear at first sight, it is still improbable, on a closer examination, that it is correct; for, first, the great similarity between the two Epistles makes against it, as this must evidently have rendered their mutual transfer of less consequence. Then, too, it is not common to direct special salutations to be given to those to whom we write ourselves at the same time, which is done by Paul in relation to the Laodiceans in his letter to the Colossians (*passim*). Moreover, our Epistle to the Ephesians, as a circular letter, could not well be designated by the name: Epistle to the Laodiceans. Thus it is far more probable that this letter was a separate one, which has been lost to us.

As early as the time of *Jerome*, there existed a separate Epistle to the Laodiceans, different from that to the Ephesians. But the Father just mentioned remarks, that all without exception reject it. It is probable, therefore, that, on account of the passage Col. 4: 15, 16, some one had forged an Epistle to the Laodiceans, just as was the case, as we have before stated, with the first Epistle to the Corinthians which was lost.

There remain therefore only the three Epistles of the Apostle which are usually comprehended under the title of *Pastoral letters*, viz. the two to Timothy, and that to Titus. They are all three occupied with a consideration of the duties of a pastor of the church

of Christ, and on account of this common purport are classed under the general designation which we have mentioned. In a close investigation of the contents and the historical allusions of these Epistles there arise very many difficulties, on which account they have become subject to doubt beyond all the other Pauline Epistles. Ancient tradition is certainly wholly in favor of their genuineness, as in relation to the Epistle to the Ephesians. For the circumstance that Marcion did not have them in his canon is not regarded as important even by opponents of the Epistles, who are at all impartial. It was undoubtedly only through accident that these Epistles remained unknown to him, and to his native city Sinope, upon the Black Sea. For had he possessed historical reasons against its reception, they could not have been so completely lost at a later period. We may here see, in fact, a very important evidence in behalf of the genuineness of these Epistles. For *Timothy* lived, when Paul wrote to him, not in a distant, unknown place, but in Ephesus, one of the chief cities frequented by the Christians of the ancient church. The scene of the labors of Titus, was the isle of Crete, which also, on account of its vicinity to Corinth and to other important churches, maintained lively intercourse with the churches generally. Now, how Epistles directed to persons laboring in places of so much note, and holding so high a rank, as being assistants of the apostle, could gain the reputation of being genuine throughout the whole ancient church, when they were really forged in the name of the apostle, is

indeed difficult of comprehension, as so many must have been able to expose the deception. Supposing, therefore, that on a close investigation of the contents of the Epistle there should appear much that is strange, it must be considered as losing a great deal of its influence in relation to the question of the genuineness of the Epistles, from the fact that this is so firmly established by the tradition of the church.

Another circumstance to be premised, which is very much in favor of their genuineness, is that in all the three Epistles there occurs a multitude of personal and particular allusions. Now it is clear that an impostor, who was palming off his own Epistles as another's (for such is the language which we must use concerning the author of these three compositions, if they are not the work of Paul himself, since he expressly names himself as the author, besides indicating the fact in a manner not to be mistaken), would avoid as much as possible all special circumstances, because he would be too likely to betray himself in touching upon them, since particulars cannot be very minutely known to a stranger. Moreover, a forgery generally wants that graphic exactness which is exhibited so manifestly in writings that spring out of actually existing circumstances. Hence every unprejudiced person would in the outset think it very unlikely that a writing was forged, in which there occurred such special allusions as we find in 1 Tim. 5: 23, where Paul says to Timothy : "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Of the

same nature, also, is a passage in the second Epistle to Timothy (2 Tim. 4: 13), in which the Apostle complains that he had, through forgetfulness, left his cloak, some books, and parchments with a friend, and desires Timothy to take care of them. Plainly, such things are not forged ; for to what end should any one give himself the useless trouble to invent such insignificant matters, if they did not actually happen, since they could not do either any harm or any good. In the same Epistle (2 Tim. 4: 20, 21), Paul sends salutations from many individuals, and gives various information respecting persons of their mutual acquaintance. "Erastus abode at Corinth," says Paul, "but Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick ;" and he invites Timothy himself to come to him before winter. If any person invented all this, we must at least call him extremely inconsiderate ; for he ought not certainly to have mentioned such noted cities ; since the Christians who dwelt in them could learn without any great difficulty whether any one of the name of Trophimus was ever at Miletus with the apostle, and was left there by him sick, and whether Erastus abode at Corinth. The same is true of the Epistle to Titus, as one may be convinced by examining Titus 3: 12.

Still, let us look at the reasons which are advanced *against* the genuineness of these Epistles. Certain investigators have thought that there was in all three of them something, not only in the phraseology, but in the style altogether, which cannot but be regarded as unlike Paul. The weakness of such statements, how-

ever, may be clearly inferred from the fact, that another investigator, of no less acuteness, supposes the second Epistle to Timothy and the one to Titus to be really genuine Epistles of Paul, while the first to Timothy is spurious and imitated from the other two. This second investigator, therefore, founds his argument for the spuriousness of the first of the three Epistles on the genuineness of the two others, thus overthrowing, by his own reasoning, the position of the former investigators in regard to the necessity of supposing them all spurious. The historical difficulties, however, which are discerned on close examination of the Epistles, are of more consequence. It is from these, properly, that all attacks upon these pastoral letters have originated, and in these they find their excuse; only writers ought not to have so manifestly confounded *difficulties* with *positive arguments against the genuineness of a writing*.

As to the *first* Epistle to Timothy, the principal difficulty is, to point out a period in Paul's life exactly coinciding with the statement which the apostle makes at the outset (1: 3). He says that when he went to Macedonia he left Timothy at Ephesus, to protect the true faith and thwart heretics in that city. Now we know, indeed, that when Demetrius, the silver-smith, drove Paul from Ephesus, he went to Macedonia; but it is impossible that he should then have left Timothy behind at Ephesus, since he sent him before himself to Macedonia with Erastus. Thus, when Paul wrote his second Epistle to the Corinthians from Macedonia,

Timothy was with him. (Comp. Acts 19: 22. 2 Cor. 1: 1.) Moreover, we are informed of no other journey of Paul from Ephesus to Macedonia, when he left Timothy behind in the city to watch over the church ; and hence arises a difficulty in assigning this Epistle its proper place in Paul's life.

There are similar circumstances respecting the *second* Epistle. This Epistle, too, is directed to Timothy at Ephesus. Paul clearly writes from Rome. (Comp. 2 Tim. 4: 16, 17 with 2 Tim. 1: 16, 18. 4: 19.) He was in bonds (1: 16), and was expecting a new examination of his cause. Now, he invites Timothy to come to him, and requests him to make haste and come before winter (4: 13, 21). But, according to Col. 1: 1, Philemon v. 1, and Phil. 1: 1, Timothy, at the time of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, as related by Luke in the Acts, was in Paul's company ; and hence it seems impossible that Paul could have written to him at Ephesus. It is true Paul's imprisonment at Rome lasted two years, and it might be supposed that Timothy was for some time with him, and for some time away during his imprisonment ; but there are other circumstances which make it very improbable that the second Epistle to Timothy was written during the same imprisonment in which the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians were composed. According to 2 Tim. 4: 18, Paul had left at Troas, a cloak, books, and parchments, which Timothy was to bring with him when he came to Paul (v. 21). Now, before Paul's imprisonment at Rome, which lasted two

years, he was also two years in prison at Cæsarea. We should therefore, be compelled to suppose that he had left these things behind at Troas, four years before. But certainly it is probable that Paul would have made some other disposition of them in the mean time, if they were of any consequence to him. But even if we may suppose that Paul would send for clothing and books which had laid at Troas for years, it is out of the question that he should say in relation to a journey made four years before: "Erastus abode at Corinth, but Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick." (2 Tim. 4: 20.) Miletus was in the vicinity of Ephesus, at a distance from Rome where Paul was writing. Now if Paul had not been in Miletus for four years, it is wholly impossible that he should have mentioned the illness of one whom he left behind at Miletus so long a time before, because his case must long since have been decided. Similar difficulties present themselves, likewise, on a close examination of the *Epistle to Titus*. For Paul writes in this Epistle (1: 4, 5. 3: 12), that he himself had been in the island of Crete, and had left Titus there behind him for the same purpose which caused him to leave Timothy in Ephesus; and states that he intended to spend the winter in Nicopolis, whither he directs Titus to come and meet him. Now, it is true, Paul, according to the Acts (27: 8) was once in Crete, but it was as a prisoner and on a voyage. In these circumstances, therefore, he could not accomplish much; nor could he leave Titus behind, as on his voyage Titus was nowhere in his neigh-

borhood. Nothing is told us in any part of the New Testament history as to Paul's residence in Nicopolis, and it is the more difficult to come to any assurance respecting it from the fact, that there were so many cities of that name. Thus this Epistle, likewise, cannot be assigned to its place in Paul's history, and therefore it is perfectly true, that there are difficulties incident to an examination of these pastoral letters; but, as we have before observed, difficulties are not equivalent to positive arguments against their genuineness. It is true they would be, were we so exactly and minutely acquainted with the history of the apostle Paul, that such a difficulty in assigning an Epistle its place among the circumstances of his life would be the same as an impossibility. If, for example, we knew with certainty that the apostle Paul never resided in any city by the name of Nicopolis, we should be obliged to consider the Epistle to Titus, which purports to have been written from some place called Nicopolis, as spurious and forged.

But this is so far from being the case, that in those Epistles of Paul which are admitted to be genuine, very many occurrences are noticed, of which we have no further information. A remarkable instance of this kind is the well known passage, 2 Cor. 11: 23 seq., in which Paul states, that he had five times received of the Jews forty stripes save one, thrice been beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, etc. etc. Of very few of these sufferings of Paul do we know the particulars. How much, therefore, of what

took place in his life, may remain unknown to us. It is to be remembered, too, that the brief general statements given by Luke in the Acts extend over long periods in the apostle's life. At Corinth, Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Rome, Paul abode for years. Now, as slight journeys abroad are, it is well known, commonly comprehended by historians in a residence at any particular place for a long period, may not this have been frequently the case in Luke's history? Many have thought this probable, and have therefore supposed short journeys from this or that place, and in this way have attempted to find some situation in Paul's life, which should appear suitable for the composition of one or another of the pastoral letters. We will not trouble our readers, however, with an enumeration of these different views, which, nevertheless, show that it is not *impossible* to designate some situation in which Paul might have written these Epistles. We choose rather to confine ourselves to the development of an important supposition by which a suitable period of time is obtained for all the three Epistles together, and their relation to each other is determined. This supposition is, that Paul was set at liberty from the first imprisonment at Rome related by Luke, (which had lasted two years when Luke finished his book of Acts,) performed important missionary tours afterward, and was at last *imprisoned a second time at Rome*, and at this time died there a martyr's death. It is very evident that if we can in this way gain space of time for another journey to Asia and Crete, it will be easy

to imagine the situations which gave rise to the first Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus. The second Epistle to Timothy must then have been written in Rome itself during the second imprisonment, and any remarkable expressions which it contains are then perfectly intelligible, if it be supposed that Paul wrote the Epistle after his arrival at Rome from Asia Minor. The only question is, whether this supposition, that Paul was a second time imprisoned at Rome, is a mere hypothesis, or can be sustained by any historical evidence. Were it a mere conjecture, it must be admitted, it would be of little importance. There are not wanting, however, some historical facts of such a nature as to confirm the supposition. First, we find it current among the Fathers of the fourth century. It is true, they do not expressly present historical grounds for their opinion; they seem rather to have inferred a second imprisonment at Rome from the second Epistle to Timothy. But, that they at once assumed a second imprisonment, when they might have hit upon other modes of explanation, seems to indicate a tradition, however obscure, in regard to the fact of its having occurred. Moreover, we are told by a very ancient writer of the Roman church, the apostolic Father Clemens Romanus, that Paul went to the farthest west. This must mean Spain. In the Epistle to the Romans (chap. xv.) Paul expresses a strong desire to visit that country. This he cannot have done before his first imprisonment; it is not at all improbable, therefore, that he may afterwards have journeyed to

this country, the most western region of the then known world.

Whatever may be thought of this supposition, so much is clear—the difficulties with which the attentive reader meets in the Epistles, are no arguments against their genuineness. Indeed every thing essential is in their favor. The internal similarity of the Epistles, however, makes it probable that they were composed about the same time, and the idea that they were written during the second imprisonment, of which we have spoken, accords very well with this supposition.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

OF the investigations of learned men respecting the genuineness of the writings of the New Testament, we have hitherto been able to give a very favorable account ; but the case seems now to be different, in considering the investigations respecting the Epistle to the Hebrews. For, he who has been accustomed to reckon this Epistle among those of Pauline origin (the Lutheran version, such as it now is, expressly attributing it to this apostle, although *Luther* himself, as will be shown presently, held a different opinion), may be surprised at hearing that the latest, extremely thorough and generally impartial, investigations respecting this important Epistle, determine that Paul was not its author.* We have before remarked, that the genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not at all in question : the only inquiry is, who was its author. For

* But see Professor Stuart's discussion of this point in his masterly Commentary upon the Epistle. See also an able discussion of it in a work published at London in 1830, entitled "Biblical Notes and Dissertations, etc." written by Joseph John Gurney, an Englishman, member of the Society of Friends. Mr. Gurney's dissertation was republished in the Biblical Repository for July 1832 (Vol. II. p. 409).—Th.

he has neither named nor designated himself throughout the Epistle. Thus, even though Paul should not be considered the author, it does not follow that the Epistle is a forged, spurious one.

Now, that the case of this Epistle must be peculiar, is clear from the fact, that it was not admitted into the midst of the other Pauline Epistles. In the Greek Testament it does indeed come directly after the Epistle to Philemon, and thus by the side of the collection of Paul's Epistles (though *Luther* has placed it after the Epistles of Peter and John); but it is clear that this large and important Epistle would have been placed among the other large Epistles of the same apostle to whole churches, perhaps after the Epistles to the Corinthians, had it been originally regarded as a production of the apostle to the Gentiles.* Consequently, its position after the Epistle to Philemon, the smallest and most inconsiderable of Paul's private letters, shows plainly, that it was not generally reckoned as one of the Pauline Epistles, until after the collection of them was completed. However, all this is, of course, of an incidental nature; there are far more important reasons, which make it improbable that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; and to the consideration of these we will now direct our attention.

* According to *Epiphanius*, a church-father of the fourth century, some Mss. placed the Epistle to the Hebrews *before the Epistles to Timothy*; probably only because it seemed to some copyists improper that an Epistle to a whole church should stand after Epistles to private individuals.

The *form* of the Epistle is, it is seen, entirely different from that of Paul's letters. He opens each of his Epistles, not only with his name and the title of his sacred office, but also with an apostolic salutation : "Grace be with you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Nothing of this kind is to be seen at the commencement of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It begins like a treatise (which indeed many have been inclined to suppose it to be), without any reference to its readers : "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, etc." The conclusion bears more resemblance to Paul's Epistles ; for it contains a salutation, such as those of the apostle, and announces a visit to the readers of the Epistle on the part of the author in company with Timothy. The writer sends a salutation on the part of the brethren *from* Italy ; from whence it has been erroneously inferred that the Epistle was written in Italy, whereas the phraseology indicates exactly the contrary.* For

* The original Greek reads, οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας, which is translated in our English version "they of Italy." Olshausen considers it necessary to translate ἀπό *from*, making the whole expression to mean, *those who had come from Italy to some place where Paul was writing*. Consultation of a good Greek lexicon will cause any one to doubt whether there is any such necessity as Olshausen supposes. See, for example, in Passow, under the word ἀπό, such expressions as, αἷμα ἀπὸ Τρώων, the blood of the Trojans, οἱ ἀπὸ Ἠλλάτωνος, they of Plato's party, etc.—TR.

the author would not have employed such an expression unless he was writing *out of* Italy in a place whither brethren had arrived *from* that country. The Epistle contains no particular salutations from one individual to another; but this is not strange, as it is addressed to so many. For the *Hebrews*, to whom the Epistle was written, were the Jewish Christians who lived in Palestine. Their benefit was intended by the entire contents of this profound Epistle. It analyzes thoroughly the relation of the Old Testament to the New.

Nevertheless, it may be said, no very great stress ought to be laid upon the external *form* of the Epistle; Paul might for once have deviated from his usual custom. But the *historical evidence* is very decisive in regard to this Epistle. For, in the western church, and particularly in the Roman, the Epistle to the Hebrews was not at all acknowledged as Paul's production until sometime in the fourth century. It was through *Augustine's* means, who died so late as 430 A. D., that it first became common to ascribe it to Paul; and even this Father of the church sometimes speaks doubtfully of the Epistle, as do other Fathers after his time. Plainly this is very remarkable. For, if it be considered how well known Paul was, and how deeply loved at Rome, and that he was twice imprisoned there for years, it will be evident that it must have been known in that city whether Paul was its author or not. Thus the testimony of this Roman church is of the highest importance in the question under examination. Now, it is observable, that *Clement* of Rome, an immediate

disciple of Paul, makes very ample use of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and even introduces long passages of it into his own Epistle to the Corinthians. This is indeed a very decisive proof of the high antiquity of the Epistle; but Clement does not mention the author of the writing from which he quoted, and therefore the use he has made of it has no further influence in regard to the question, who was its author. Still, he must certainly have liked the Epistle and esteemed it very highly; otherwise he would not have been induced to embellish his own Epistle with large passages from it, which are interwoven with his train of thought as though they were original.

That in the West there was general uncertainty in regard to the author of the Epistle, is shown by the circumstance, that an African Father of the church, *Tertullian*, names Barnabas as its author. Others, especially some orientals, ascribed it to Luke, and some to the before-mentioned *Clement*, though unfortunately without good reason. There was no uniform tradition in the West in regard to its authorship; it was, from conjecture alone, ascribed to various individuals.

The case was totally different with the Greek church in the East. The predominant opinion with this was that Paul was the author. It was the celebrated Fathers of the Alexandrian church especially, together with the Syrians, who made great use of the Epistle to the Hebrews and referred it to the apostle Paul. The old Syriac version contains it in its canon. This circumstance is not to be overlooked, particularly as the

Epistle is directed to the Christians in Palestine, from whom of course it might very easily come into the hands of the neighboring Syrians and Egyptians. Historical testimony, however, in favor of any Epistle must be sought for mainly in the place where it was composed and that to which it was addressed. One of these furnishes evidence against the Pauline origin of the Epistle and the other in its favor; a circumstance which, as we shall see hereafter, is of no slight consequence in an inquiry respecting the canonical authority of the Epistle.

Although the Greek, and especially the Alexandrian, Fathers were favorably disposed towards the Epistle to the Hebrews, the learned among them admitted the great difference between it and the other Epistles of Paul. They explained this difference by supposing that Paul wrote the Epistle in Hebrew and Luke translated it into Greek. This Evangelist was fixed upon as the translator, because, as was thought, a resemblance was discovered between his style and that of the Epistle. The supposition, however, is not at all probable; for the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews is so peculiarly Greek, that it cannot have been translated from the Hebrew. We may see, merely, from the conjecture thus presented, that inquiring minds, in perusing the Epistle, came to doubt whether it was really Pauline in its character, even where it was commonly considered as a Pauline production.

Hence it was, that our *Luther*, when he studied the Scriptures in a critical manner, renewed the doubts

respecting the Pauline origin of the Epistle to the Hebrews, after it had been regarded throughout the middle ages as the apostle Paul's production. He writes on this point as follows : "As yet, we have mentioned only the principal, indubitably genuine books of the New Testament. The four following books, however,* have in times past held a different rank. And first, that the Epistle to the Hebrews is not St. Paul's, nor any apostle's, is proved by the tenor of v. 3. of Chap. ii : 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.' It is clear that he speaks of the apostles as though he were a disciple, to whom this salvation had come from the apostles, perhaps long after." (See Walch's Ed. Luther's Works, Th. XIV. p. 146.) The passage to which Luther refers is indeed remarkable, and has been employed by scholars of a more recent day to prove that Paul cannot have been the author of the Epistle. For we know that he always maintained strongly (particularly in the outset of the Epistle to the Galatians), in opposition to his Jewish adversaries, who presumed to dispute his apostolic authority, that he was not a disciple of the apostles, but had received everything from the immediate revelation of God. How then is it conceivable, that in Heb. 2: 3, he should have represented himself as a disciple of

* He means, besides the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of James and Jude and the Revelation of John.

the apostle's ; and this in an Epistle to Jewish Christians, before whom it was specially important for him to appear as a real apostle of our Lord ? This circumstance, moreover, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians, deprives of all probability that interpretation of the passage according to which Paul speaks merely out of courtesy, as though he himself was a disciple of the apostles, which in reality was the case only with his readers. For then Paul would have expressed himself in a manner very liable to be misapprehended, and that this should have happened when his relation to the Jewish Christians was so peculiar, is extremely improbable. Luther, with his free, bold disposition, which did indeed sometimes carry him beyond the limits of truth in his critical investigations, did not content himself with merely disputing the Pauline origin of the Epistle ; he even ventured to institute conjectures respecting its author. He regarded the celebrated *Apollos* as its author ; the same of whom mention is made in the Acts. In truth this supposition possesses extreme probability, and has therefore, of all the hypotheses respecting the author of the Epistle, recommended itself most even to recent investigators. The book of Acts describes this man as having precisely that character of mind which the author of this Epistle must have had, to judge from its contents. He is stated (Acts 18: 24) to have been by birth an Alexandrian, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. Now, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows himself to have been thoroughly acquainted

with the Old Testament, and eloquently maintains the deep and sublime ideas which it presents. According to the same passage, he constantly overcame the Jews in conversation with them, and proved publicly, by means of the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ. Undoubtedly, in these disputes he made use of just such forcible expositions of the Old Testament as those of which we find so many in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and which were very commonly employed by the Alexandrians in particular. The idea that Titus, or Luke, or Clement, might have been the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is untenable, for this reason, if there were no other, that these men were Gentiles by birth, and the author declares himself a native Jew. There would be more reason for fixing upon Silas or Silvanus, who were, as we know, Paul's companions, or, likewise, upon Barnabas. For the last we have even one historical evidence, as we have already remarked. A Father of the church, *Tertullian*, expressly ascribes the Epistle to Barnabas. But, as we have an Epistle written by this assistant of the apostles, we are able to see from it with perfect certainty that he cannot be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. His whole manner of writing and thinking is different from the course of ideas in this production. It is true there is nothing so decisive against Silas ; but, too, there is nothing definite *in his favor*. His peculiar character of mind is nowhere described, as the character of Apollos is in the Acts of the Apostles.

The idea, therefore, that Silas was the author of the

Epistle is a wholly unsupported conjecture. It is true, too, it is merely a conjecture, that Apollos wrote it ; but it is a conjecture more probable than could be required or wished in respect to opinions of any other nature than those in question.

But, though we could assign the name of the author, it would be of little consequence in our investigation. It is sufficient that we cannot suppose Paul to have been the author.

Here, however, arises the very difficult question, what we are to think of the *canonical authority* of the Epistle, if its author was not an apostle ; for the primitive church would not receive the writings of any but these into the collection of sacred books, and those who rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, e. g. the Roman church, did it for the very reason, that they could not admit Paul to have been its author. *Must we then reject the Epistle to the Hebrews, or at least esteem it less highly than the other writings of the New Testament, because it was not written by Paul ?* This inquiry merits the more careful consideration, because the contents of the Epistle are of a very profound and important nature to the church generally, and the evangelical church in particular. For the sacred doctrine of the high-priesthood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is, in this very Epistle to the Hebrews, treated of more at length and more thoroughly than in any other book of the New Testament. Hence the circumstance that the Epistle is not from the pen of the apostle Paul might give rise to inferences against

the validity of the doctrine which this Epistle in particular inculcates.

It must certainly be admitted that the ruling idea in the formation of the canon was to admit only apostolic productions. For although Mark and Luke, whose writings were acknowledged by the whole church, were not apostles, they were in intimate connection with Peter and Paul, and their works were therefore regarded as properly the productions of those apostles. And this principle was perfectly correct. Though it must be allowed that the Holy Spirit might exert its power on others besides the apostles, and might enable them to compose excellent productions, still it was wise in the ancient church to restrict the canon of the Holy Scriptures, which were to serve as the *norm* or *rule* of faith and practice, for the complete development of the kingdom of God, exclusively to apostolic writings. For the Apostles, as most immediately connected with our Saviour, had received into their souls in the greatest abundance and purity the spirit of truth which flowed forth from him. The more distant the relation which individuals sustained to our Lord, the feebler the influence of the Spirit from above upon them, and the more easily might their acts be affected by other influences. It was therefore necessary that the church should admit as the norm of faith only such writings as sprang from the most lively and purest operation of the Holy Spirit, as it was manifested in the apostles. Otherwise there would have been ground for fear lest errors, perhaps indeed of a slight character,

might have crept in, and then been continued from generation to generation in the Holy Scriptures, and propagated as of sacred authority. It was such thoughts undoubtedly which induced some learned men to distinguish the Epistle to the Hebrews and certain other books of the New Testament, which were not adopted with perfect unanimity by the primitive church, from those which were properly canonical and universally acknowledged, denominating the former *deutero-canonical*. They probably regarded it as possible that some error had crept into these books, notwithstanding the excellence of their contents generally, and in order to obviate the influence of such errors they were desirous of introducing an external separation of these writings from those which were decidedly apostolical. But, with regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews, we must say, that this separation appears totally unfounded. Probable as it certainly is, that Paul did not compose the Epistle, it is still certain that its author wrote it under the influence of Paul, and an influence indeed which exhibits itself still more definitely than that of the same apostle over the writings of Luke, or of Peter over the Gospel of Mark. This position is sustained by history, as well as by the contents of the Epistle, in the most decisive manner.

On the score of history, in the first place, we cannot, except on the supposition that Paul had an essential share in the composition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, explain the remarkable circumstance that the entire oriental church attributed it to the apostle. This view

continued to prevail in the East, even after it was very well known that the western churches, particularly that of Rome, held a different opinion. The tradition, that Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, cannot have rested on mere conjecture, since there was in fact much in the Epistle itself which constrained learned men, who in the main shared the prevalent opinion respecting the author of the Epistle, to resort to expedients for the purpose of upholding the general idea that Paul wrote the Epistle, and at the same time of solving the difficulties which this supposition involved. Such an expedient, for example, was the idea, of which we have before spoken, that Paul might have written the Epistle in Hebrew, so that we have only a translation of it. Let it be considered, too, that this opinion of the Pauline origin of the Epistle prevailed in the very countries to which its original readers belonged ; and then no one will doubt that the only mode of explaining it is, to suppose Paul to have coöperated in the composition of the Epistle, and the first readers of it to have been aware of the fact, and on this account to have referred the Epistle to Paul himself.

To this is to be added, the character of the Epistle itself. For, although the ancient observation, that the style of the Epistle is not Pauline, is perfectly well-founded, still the tenor of the ideas bears a resemblance, which is not to be mistaken, to the writings of the great apostle of the Gentiles. If we merely keep in mind, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Jewish Christians, while the other Pauline Epistles

were all of them* written to churches the majority of whose members were Gentiles, we shall not discover the least thing in the Epistle which could not have proceeded from the mind of Paul. Indeed, the main doctrine of the great apostle, that in the death of Jesus an offering of reconciliation was made for the whole world, that with and through it all the ceremonial observances of the Old Testament first obtained their fulfilment as types of what was to come, forms the central point of the Epistle to the Hebrews. If it be further considered, that there was always a certain distance of demeanor between the apostle Paul and the Jewish Christians, even the best of them, it will be very easy to understand why Paul did not write to them himself; and still, it must have been his heart's desire to exhibit clearly and in suitable detail his views in regard to the law and its relation to Christianity, which were of a profound nature and drawn directly from the genuine spirit of the Gospel. What more obvious mode of presenting these to the Hebrews, than through the medium of a disciple or faithful friend, who, like Apollos, had a correct apprehension of this relation between the old and new covenant.

Supposing this to have been the state of the case, all the circumstances in regard to the Epistle are ex-

* Though the expression is thus general in the original, of course only those Epistles which are directed to churches can be here referred to. The phraseology is exceptionable, as some of Paul's letters are not directed to churches at all, but to individuals.—TR.

plained. In the West it was known that Paul did not write the Epistle. On this account the western church denied that he was the author, without being able, however, to designate any other individual as the author. In the East, on the other hand, it was known that he had an influence in the composition of the Epistle; and moreover his spirit and his ideas were recognized in it. In the East, therefore, it was much used; in the West less. In our days we may impartially admit that Paul was not the writer of the Epistle, and still maintain its perfect canonical authority, since the apostle certainly exerted an essential influence over its composition.

Thus, though this Epistle belongs to the class of those which have not the unanimous voice of christian antiquity in favor of their apostolic origin, still it can be shown that this want of agreement did not arise from any really suspicious state of things, but was occasioned merely by the peculiar circumstances under which it was composed.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

It has already been observed, in the first chapter, that in early times the third collection of the writings of the New Testament was termed that of *the seven Catholic Epistles*. The Greek word *Catholic* means *general*, in opposition to *particular*. Now as the church general, in opposition to individual heretical parties, was termed Catholic, so the same expression was used to denote those writings which, as universally acknowledged and used, it was designed to distinguish from those which were current only in particular circles.

The fact that those writings, which, in addition to the collections called the Gospel and the Apostle, were acknowledged to be genuine and apostolical, were thus united into one separate collection, produced this advantage, that it became thus more difficult ever to confound them with the many apocryphal writings which were spread abroad in the ancient church. In regard to the origin of this third collection, however, there is an obscurity which can never be entirely dissipated. At the end of the third and commencement of the fourth century, the collection of the seven Catholic Epistles first appears in history ; but who formed it, and where it originated, we do not know. It is impossible, however, that it should have been *accidentally* formed, as

the position of the Epistles is too peculiar for us to suppose this. The Epistle of James, which was by no means unanimously regarded as apostolic, holds the first place in the collection, while the first Epistle of Peter and the first of John, which have always been regarded as of apostolic authority, come afterward. This very order of the seven Epistles, however, suggests to us, by the way, a probable supposition as to the place *where* the collection of these Catholic Epistles must have originated. James, the author of the Epistle of James in the canon, nowhere possessed a higher reputation than in Palestine and Syria. For he was a brother, i. e. according to the Hebrew mode of speaking, a cousin of our Lord, and at the same time bishop of the church at Jerusalem and head of the Jewish Christians, as we shall presently show more at length. In the same countries Peter was held in high estimation as the one among our Lord's apostles to whom, in particular, was committed the preaching of the gospel among the Jews. It is probable, therefore, that the collection of the Catholic Epistles originated in Palestine or Syria, and, out of veneration for the brother of our Lord and the first bishop of Jerusalem, the author of the collection gave to the Epistle of James the first place, and put those of Peter next. The Epistles of John had less interest for him, on account of his Judaizing sentiments, and the Epistle of Jude he placed at the very end. The supposition we have made finds confirmation in the fact, that a Father of the Palestinian church, *Eusebius*, bishop of Caesarea, gives

us the first certain account of the existence of a collection of the seven Catholic Epistles.

From the various character of the writings classed together in the collection, we may see clearly its late origin. For it has already been mentioned above (Chap. I.), that the first Epistles of John and that of Peter were originally, as being very ancient and universally-admitted writings, connected with *the Apostle*, so called, i. e. the collection of the Pauline Epistles. At a later period, in order to leave these latter by themselves, the two Epistles were taken from the collection of Pauline writings and classed with the five other apostolic Epistles. These last, however, belonged to the number of those which were universally admitted in primitive times, and thus Antilegomena and Homologoumena were introduced into one and the same collection. Still there arose from this procedure one advantage, viz. that the Epistles of the same author were, as was proper, brought together. *Luther*, with his excellent tact, correctly felt that the collection of the Catholic Epistles unsuitably confounded writings which were universally admitted with those which were not, and therefore placed the Epistles of Peter and John immediately after those of Paul, and then at the end, after the Epistle to the Hebrews, the letters of James and Jude and the Revelation of John. Still, this did not wholly do away with the impropriety, as the second Epistle of Peter also had been disputed with special zeal. Had he, however, placed this Epistle likewise at the end of the New Testament, along

with the other Antilegomena, he must have disturbed too much the old accustomed arrangement. He left it, therefore, and also the two smaller Epistles of John, in connection with the first and main Epistle of the two apostles. It is to be considered, too, that the bearing of the arrangement of the New Testament books upon our critical inquiries is of but secondary consideration; the main point is their internal character, and in reference to this no fault can be found with the original arrangement.

In regard, therefore, to the Catholic Epistles generally, little further can be said. Of the Epistles individually we will consider first the *three Epistles of John*. As to the first, and main Epistle, it, like the Gospel of John, was always regarded by the ancient church as the production of the Evangelist of that name. In modern times, it is true, doubts have been started in relation to the Gospel. But the principal writer by whom they have been suggested has himself since retracted them. Indeed, it was nothing but the very striking similarity in style and ideas between the Gospel and the first Epistle of John, which made it necessary, almost, whether one would or no, to extend the opposition against the Gospel to the Epistle likewise; for one cannot but suppose them both to have had the same author, from their resemblance in every peculiar characteristic. If therefore the Epistle were admitted to have been written by the Evangelist John, the Gospel also could not but be attributed to him. But though there may have been a somewhat plausible reason for

disputing the Gospel in the idea that the Saviour is represented by John very differently from the exhibition of him in the other Gospels, in regard to the Epistle there is no reason which possesses the slightest plausibility for disputing it. On the supposition that it is spurious, the error of the whole ancient church in referring it, without contradiction, to the Evangelist John, would be completely inexplicable ; especially, if we carefully compare the history of the Epistle with that of the Evangelist. John, as we have before remarked, lived the longest of all the apostles, viz. till some time in the reign of Domitian, and he resided at Ephesus in Asia Minor. From no country within the limits of the church, therefore, could we expect to receive more accurate accounts in regard to the writings of the beloved disciple of our Lord than from those of Asia Minor. Now it is from these very countries that we receive the most ancient testimonies in behalf of the existence and genuineness of the Epistle. Instead of mentioning all, I will name but two of these testimonies, which, however, are so decisive that we can perfectly well dispense with all the rest. The first is presented by *Papias*, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, whom we have already mentioned. This man lived, as has been before said, at the end of the first century and beginning of the second, in the immediate vicinity of Ephesus, where the Evangelist John labored so long and so successfully. He knew not only the Evangelist John, but other immediate disciples of our Lord, who were probably of the number of the Seventy, particularly a

certain Aristion, and another John surnamed the Presbyter. Now, is it to be supposed that such a man, who had at his command so many means of arriving at certainty respecting John's writings, could possibly be deceived in regard to them? We must, indeed, renounce all historical testimony, if we deny this witness the capacity to speak in behalf of the genuineness of this Epistle of John.

The second testimony, however, is of equal importance. One of the apostolic Fathers, *Polycarp*, bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor, makes use of the first Epistle of John, in the same way as Papias, as though it was admitted to be a genuine production of the Evangelist. Now Polycarp lived till after the middle of the second century, and at the age of eighty-six died a martyr's death in the flames. He had not merely become acquainted with John in the neighboring city of Ephesus, but had even heard him preach the way of salvation, and was his faithful disciple. The testimony of such a man, therefore, is likewise above all cavil, and is especially confirmed by the fact, that there never has been in later times any general opinion against its genuineness, either in the catholic church or among the adherents to any particular sect. Against this weight of historical evidence, therefore, nothing can be effected by the mere conjectures of modern times; and at present all theologians are perfectly agreed in the acknowledgment of this precious relic of the beloved disciple of Jesus, his first Epistle.

If, in regard to the *second and third Epistles* of

John, such perfect agreement of the ancient church in recognizing their genuineness cannot be asserted, the reason of this lies entirely in a circumstance, which also occasioned the tardy insertion of the pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus in the collection of Pauline Epistles, viz. that they are directed to private persons, and moreover are of no very great extent or very important contents, and thus awakened less interest in their diffusion.

The *second Epistle* of John is addressed to a Christian lady and her family ; the *third* to a Christian friend, named Caius. Of the private circumstances of these two persons we know nothing but what is indicated in the letters. Now, although certainly these two smaller Epistles afford no important information respecting the Gospel or the history of the ancient church, still, as estimable legacies of the disciple who lay in Jesus's bosom, they deserve a place in the canon as much as Paul's Epistle to Philemon. The oldest Fathers of the church express no doubt in regard to the two Epistles. Only at a later period do we find certain individuals entertaining doubts whether these two Epistles were written by John the Evangelist. No one regarded them as forged in the name of the Evangelist ; for we can by no means perceive for what purpose these Epistles could, in such a case, have been written. They aim at no particular object, but are merely expressive of the tenderest christian love. Many however, believed that another John, viz. *John the Presbyter*, before mentioned, with whom Papias was

acquainted, was the author of the Epistles. This view appeared confirmed by the fact, that in the salutations of both Epistles, John expressly terms himself *Presbyter*; and as, moreover, the other John likewise lived in Ephesus, it is possible they might have been confounded. But in modern times these doubts in regard to the apostolic character of the two small Epistles have been disregarded, because the style and the sentiments of both Epistles are so entirely similar to the style and course of thought in the Gospels and the first Epistle, that the idea of a different author is totally untenable. Moreover, we are able to show how John the Apostle and Evangelist might also call himself Presbyter. This expression is nearly equivalent to the Latin *Senior*, or the German *Älteste*.* In the Jewish synagogues, and also among the primitive Christians, it was applied to the principal persons in the church (Comp. Acts 20: 17), and was at first used in this sense as exactly synonymous with *Episcopos*, i. e. bishop. In Asia Minor, as we know from the writings of Papias, there prevailed a peculiar custom of speaking, by which the apostles were called, as it were by way of distinction, *Elders*. Whether the intention was thereby to denote the great age of the apostles, or whether all the churches were regarded as forming one general church and the apostles as their presbyters, is doubtful. It is sufficient that the apostles were thus

* Or the English *Elder*, as it is translated in our version.—TR.

termed,* by way of eminence; for in this fact is exhibited a sufficient explanation of the inscriptions to the second and third Epistles of John. Thus the case is the same with these two Epistles as with that to the Hebrews. The primitive church adopted them, but not without opposition, and therefore we must reckon them among the *Antilegomena*; but still the reasons which were addressed against their apostolic origin may be so thoroughly refuted, that not a shadow of uncertainty can reasonably remain in regard to them.

The fourth of the seven Catholic Epistles is the first *Epistle of the apostle Peter*. As we have now come to the consideration of the Petrine writings in the canon, the question forces itself upon us, how it is to be explained that we have so few productions of Peter, and so many of Paul, who was called latest to be an apostle. When we consider what our Lord said to Peter: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16: 18), and afterwards: "Feed my lambs" (John 21: 15 seq.), it must seem strange that the powers of this rock of the church should have been exerted so little in writings for posterity. It is true, the Gospel of Mark is properly Peter's Gospel, as we have seen; but even this falls into the back-ground by the side of Luke (the Pauline Gospel), and the other Gospels, so that Peter, according to the representation of

* *Peter* calls himself in his first Epistle a *fellow-elder* (1 Pet. 5: 1).

himself in his writings, constantly appears insignificant compared with Paul.

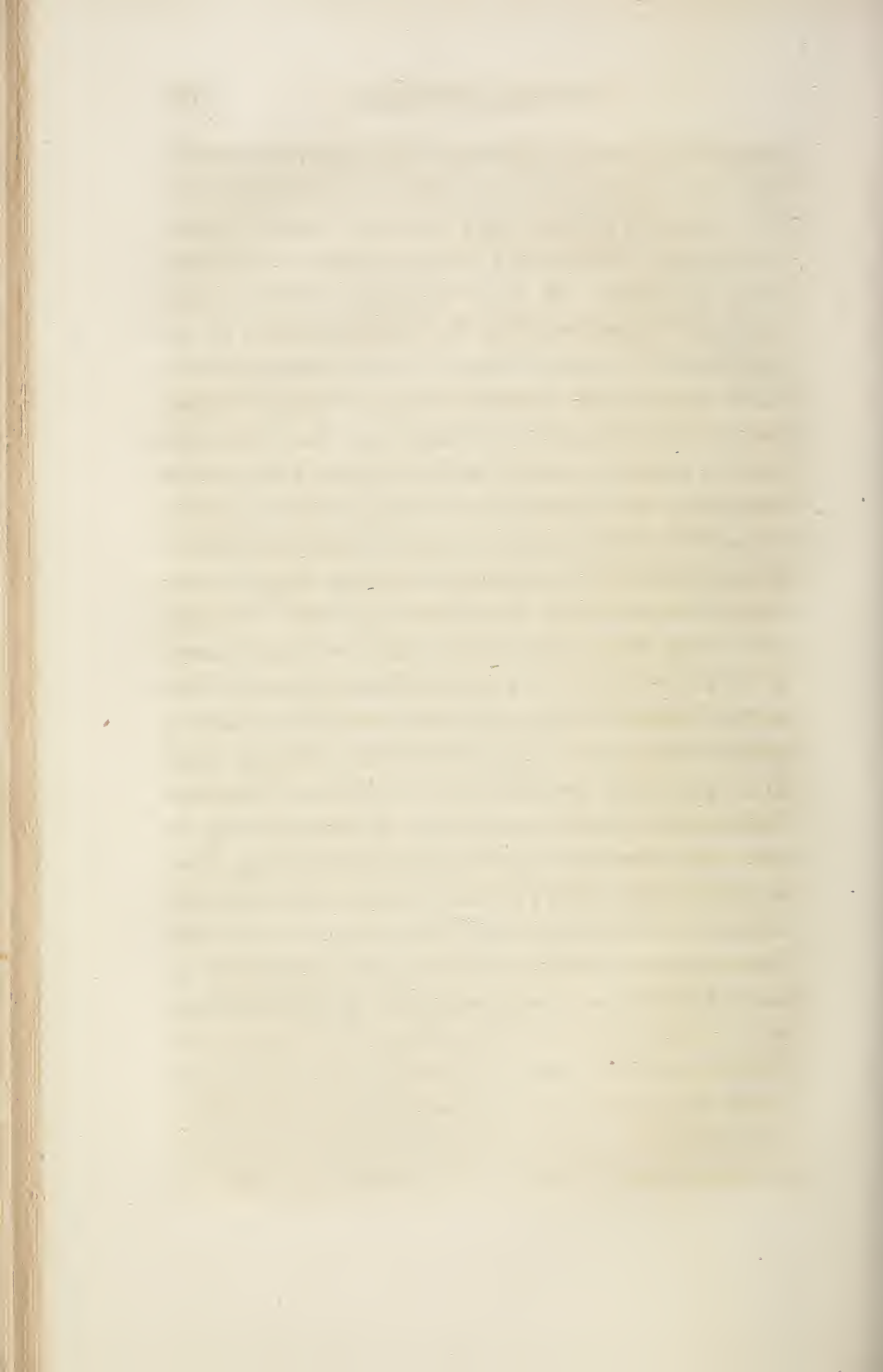
This fact finds a satisfactory explanation only in the relation of the two apostles, Peter and Paul, to the propagation of the Gospel in general. In reference to this, they had different destinations. Peter, with the twelve, was called particularly to the dissemination of the Gospel among the Jews. Had the Jewish nation acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah, Peter would then have exhibited himself in all his dignity and consequence. But that unhappy nation hardened itself against all the operations of the Spirit, and the Gospel was carried to the Gentiles, because Israel rejected the grace to which it was called. Paul was set apart for the express purpose of preaching to the Gentiles (Acts 26: 17), and, as Christianity first displayed itself in a flourishing condition among them, all the other apostles, with the exception of John alone, fell into the background in comparison with Paul, both in oral discourse, as appears from the Acts, and in these written efforts, as is shown by the New Testament canon. It is, consequently, not at all strange that Peter should be represented by two Epistles of so small a size, and that the second of these is, moreover, the most disputed book in the whole New Testament canon. His being thrown into the shade by Paul is rather in accordance with the facts respecting the extension of the church of Christ on earth in the times of the apostles.

As to the *first Epistle of Peter*, we have before seen that it belongs among the Homologoumena, along

with the first Epistle of John. In all Christian antiquity there was no one who doubted the genuineness of the Epistle, or had heard of doubts respecting it. And yet the Epistle (1 Pet. 1: 1,) is addressed to Christian churches in Asia Minor, where Christianity early gained great success and where a lively intercourse was maintained between the individual churches. Here, of necessity, must have arisen soon an opposition to this Epistle, if it had not been known that Peter had sent a circular letter to the churches. Now, the oldest Fathers of the church in Asia Minor, *Papias* and *Polycarp*, both make use of the Epistle of Peter, as well as that of John, as a genuine apostolic production. This Epistle of Peter does not seem to have made its way to Italy till a late period. At least it is wanting in the very ancient catalogue cited by *Muratorius*, which probably exhibits the canon of the early Roman church. We can infer nothing, however, from this absence against the genuineness of the first Epistle of Peter, since there is not the slightest trace of its having been disputed in the first three centuries. Yet, in modern times this decided declaration of Christian antiquity has been thought insufficient. An objection has been founded on the circumstance that Peter writes from Babylon (1 Pet. 5: 13), while history does not relate that he ever was in Babylon; as also upon the fact that he directs the attention of his readers to sufferings and persecutions which they should endure, (1 Pet. 1: 6. 3: 16. 4: 12 seq. 5: 10), referring, as is supposed, to Nero's persecution, while he himself, it

is said, died at Rome during this persecution, and therefore could not have addressed an Epistle from Babylon to those who suffered under it. Both these remarks, however, are easily obviated. As to the first, respecting the city of Babylon, we know too little of the history of Peter to be able to determine in what places he may have been, and in what not ; particularly as there were several cities of this name in the ancient world and it is not specified which is meant in the Epistle. It is to be observed, too, that many of the Fathers of the church understood the name Babylon to mean mystically the city of Rome, which showed itself the enemy of our Lord in the persecution of the faithful. (Comp. Rev. 18: 2.) If this exposition be adopted, the second remark also is at once obviated ; for, in that case, the Epistle was written by Peter in Rome itself during the persecution, and he gave the believers in Asia Minor christian exhortations in reference to such a grievous period among them. Yet, as this explanation cannot be *proved* to be correct, we set it aside, and merely observe, that in whatever Babylon Peter may have written his Epistle, his residence there can be easily reconciled with the exhortations which the Epistle contains. For, though these *may* be referred to the persecution of Nero, they may be understood with equal propriety as referring to any other persecution, since all individual characteristics, which could suit *only* this first cruel persecution of the church, are entirely wanting. Such general sufferings as these which Peter mentions must be sup-

posed to have been endured by the church everywhere and at all times, as it is always comprehended in the very idea of a believer that he should excite opposition in those who are of a worldly inclination, and thus cause a combat. A more important objection than these two remarks is, that the style and ideas of the first Epistle of Peter exhibit a strong resemblance to the style and ideas of Paul. This cannot be denied, for it is too evident not to be observed ; but it does not serve its intended purpose, viz. to deprive Peter of the authorship of the Epistle. Notwithstanding all its similarity to Paul's manner, it still maintains enough of independence and peculiarity to stamp it as the production of a man who thought for himself. As moreover, when Peter wrote this Epistle, he was connected (1 Pet. 5: 12), with the old friend and companion of Paul, *Sylvanus* (or, as abbreviated, *Silas*), nothing is more easy than to suppose that Peter dictated to the latter, and in all probability in the Hebrew language, which alone seems to have been perfectly familiar to him. In translating into Greek, Sylvanus, who, from long intimacy with Paul, had become very much habituated to his diction, may have adopted many of its characteristics, and thus have been the occasion of the somewhat Pauline coloring which the Epistle possesses.



CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

IN regard to the second Epistle of Peter, its case is very different from that of the first. The former has always been so violently attacked, and suspected on such plausible grounds of not having been written by the apostle Peter, that criticism is encompassed with as much difficulty in relation to it as in relation to any other book of the New Testament. And, moreover, such is the state of the matter, that the critical investigation of this Epistle is of particular importance. For, as we remarked in chapter first, while, in regard to many writings of the New Testament, (e. g. the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second and third Epistles of John,) the question is, not so much whether they are genuine or spurious, as who was their author, in regard to the second Epistle of Peter, the question is, in truth, whether the apostle Peter composed it, or some other Peter, or somebody of another name, who meant no harm, but still *purposely endeavored to deceive* his readers into the belief that it was written by Simon Peter, the apostle of our Lord. In the first place, the author of the Epistle not only expressly appropriates Peter's name and title: "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ," (2 Pet. 1: 1), but he also states par-

particulars respecting his own life which can have been true only of Peter. He says, for instance: "For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. *And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*" (2 Pet. 1: 16—18.) These words, it is clear, refer to the transfiguration on the mount. (Matt. 17: 1 seq.) But, besides James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, no one was a spectator of this transfiguration except the apostle Peter. If, therefore, the apostle Peter was not the author of this letter, the man who not only presumed to take upon himself the name of an apostle, but designedly endeavored to make his readers think that he was the apostle Peter, must have been a downright shameless impostor; and his production should by no means retain its place in the canon, but it is necessary that it should be at once thrust out of it.

It is for this very reason, viz. because the necessity of which we have spoken has been sensibly felt, that the friends of the work have so zealously prosecuted the investigation respecting it; though certainly not always with due impartiality and coolness. It has been forgotten that in truth very important objections may be urged against the Petrine origin of this second Epis-

tle, and it has been attempted to establish its genuineness as firmly and incontrovertibly as it is possible to establish that of other writings. The best weapon, however, which can be used in defence of God's word, is always truth ; and this compels us to admit that it is impossible to attain so firm and certain proof of the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter, as of that of other books of the New Testament. But certainly the opponents of the Epistle err greatly when they assert that the spuriousness of the Epistle can be fully established. Such an assertion cannot but be denied with all earnestness, even though, as is often the case, it be connected with the opinion, that the Epistle may notwithstanding retain its place in the canon as hitherto and be cited by preachers of the Gospel in their pulpit instructions. Such lax notions must be resisted with the utmost moral sternness. For, would it not be participating in the fraud of the author of the Epistle, were we to treat it as the genuine production of the apostle Peter, while we considered it as spurious ? If it be really spurious, and can be proved to have gained its place in the canon only through mistake, then let it be removed from the collection of the sacred writings, which from its nature excludes every fraudulent production. Christian truth would not all suffer by the removal of a single work of so slight extent.

We are convinced, however, that no such step is necessary. The most prominent error in the critical investigation of this Epistle has been that writers have

always striven to prove beyond objection either the genuineness or the spuriousness of the production. It has been forgotten that between these two positions there was a medium, viz. an impossibility of satisfactorily *proving* either. It cannot seem at all strange that this impossibility should exist in investigations respecting writings of the New Testament, if it be considered for a moment how difficult it often is to determine respecting the genuineness of a production even shortly after, or at the very time of, its composition, if from any circumstance the decisive points in the investigation have remained concealed. As in regard to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews it is entirely impossible to come to any decided result, so it seems to me probable, that the deficiency of historical evidence makes it impossible to come to a fixed conclusion in regard to the second Epistle of Peter. It is certain there are several circumstances which give rise to reasonable doubts respecting the apostolic origin of the Epistle ; still, so much may be adduced, not only in refutation of them, but in the way of positive argument *for* the Epistle, that these doubts are neutralized. Only, the favorable points do not amount to a complete, objectively valid proof, and therefore a critical investigation of the Epistle does not result exclusively to its advantage. Now, this is certainly a very unpleasant result, and one satisfactory to neither party, for men commonly wish every thing to be decided in an absolute manner, and therefore would have the Epistle declared positively either genuine or spurious.

But the main object should be the truth, and not an agreeable result ; and faithful, impartial examination leads us to the conclusion that in fact no perfect proof is to be obtained in regard to the second Epistle of Peter. This conclusion affords us the advantage, that we may with a good conscience leave the Epistle in its place among the canonical books, since it cannot rightfully be deprived of it until its spuriousness is *decisively proved*. Now, whether it shall or shall not be used in doctrinal argument, must be left to the judgment of each individual ; but at any rate no one can prohibit its use so long as its spuriousness remains unproved.

It is time, however, to consider more closely all that can be urged against the genuineness of the Epistle, and to present therewith the counter considerations which either invalidate the former or argue the apostolic composition of the Epistle. Now the most important circumstance which presents itself against the genuineness of the book is, that it was to such a degree unknown in christian antiquity. Not one of the Fathers of the first two centuries mentions the second Epistle of Peter ; they all speak of but one Epistle from the hand of this apostle. Nor are there any passages in their writings which must of necessity be citations from it. Those passages which seem like parts of it may be explained either on the score of accidental coincidence or of mutual reference to the Old Testament. It was not till after *Origen's* time, in the third century, that the Epistle came into use, and even then doubts were always current in regard to its apostolic

origin, and the learned Father *Jerome* expressly remarks that *most* denied it such an origin. It is true, this statement cannot refer to all members of the church, but only to such as were capable of critical investigations; for the same Father of the church says further, that the reason why *most* denied it to be Peter's was, the difference in style which was observable on comparison with the first; and clearly uneducated persons were incapable of judging as to such difference in style. But still, it is extremely remarkable that even in the time of *Jerome*, i. e. in the fifth century, there should be found in the church so many opponents of the Epistle.

It is, however, to be considered, in estimating the importance of this fact in relation to the genuineness of the Epistle, that no definite historical arguments are adduced against the Epistle from any quarter. Recourse is had, not to the testimony of individuals, nor to the declaration of entire churches, which denied the Epistle to be Peter's, but merely to internal reasons, deduced by the aid of criticism. This is the more strange, as it would appear that this second Epistle of Peter was addressed to the very same readers for whom the first was designed (Comp. 2 Pet. 3: 1), i. e. to the Christians in several churches of Asia Minor. From these, one would think, there must have proceeded a testimony which could not be misunderstood against the Epistle, if Peter had not written to them a second time. Nor do the Fathers say, that the Epistle contains heresies or anything else totally unworthy of the apostle; indeed they do not make the slightest

objection of this kind to the character of its contents. If, on the other hand, we look at their objections to other evidently fictitious writings, we find them asserting that they had an impious, detestable character, or that historical evidence was against their pretended apostolic origin. From the manner in which history represents the testimony of the Fathers of the church, we may suppose that their opinion respecting the genuineness of the Epistle was founded in a great measure upon the fact that its diffusion was very much delayed. Since so many writings had been forged in Peter's name, the Fathers of the church probably at once regarded an Epistle which came so late into circulation with some considerable suspicion, and then made use of the difference in language or something of the kind to confirm this suspicion. We must therefore say, that no decisive argument against the genuineness of the Epistle is to be drawn from historical considerations. Although it was but little known in the ancient church, this want of acquaintance with it may have been founded on reasons not at all connected with its spuriousness or genuineness. How many Epistles of Peter and other apostles may never have been much known? And still the circumstance that they have not been diffused abroad does not disprove their apostolic origin.

Thus, as the Fathers of the church themselves had recourse to the internal character of the Epistle, it remains for us likewise to examine this, and as particular historical traditions respecting the Epistle were as inaccessible to these Fathers as to us, and the art of

criticism has not been carried to a high point of cultivation till recently, we may lay claim to greater probability, as to the result of our investigation, than they could.

Among the striking circumstances to which we are led by a careful investigation concerning the second Epistle of Peter, the first which presents itself is the very ancient observation, that the *style* of this Epistle is quite different from that of the first. According to the most recent examinations the case is really so. The style of the second Epistle is so different from that of the first, as to make it hardly conceivable that the same author should have written thus variously; particularly as the two Epistles must have been written at no great distance of time from each other, it being necessary to refer them both to the latter part of the apostle's life. But we have seen above, that Peter probably employed another person to write for him when he composed his first Epistle; now, how natural to suppose, as *Jerome* has already suggested, that in writing the second Epistle Peter only made use of a different assistant from the one employed in writing the first, which supposition satisfactorily explains the difference in style. If it be insisted, however, that this supposition is a very violent one, we may then admit that the Epistles are in reality not apostolic, but are from *Sylvanus*, or some other writer. It is certainly true that by this hypothesis we surrender the common opinion, that Peter either guided the pen himself, or at least dictated to the amanuensis word for

word what he should write. But is it at all essential to admit that the writings of the apostles originated precisely in this way? Is a prince's letter of less value, because his secretary wrote it and the prince himself only signed it? Do we esteem the writings of Mark and Luke any the less because they were not apostles? These last writings show best how the case is to be considered. Say that these two Epistles were written by Sylvanus or Mark; is their importance to us in the least diminished, when Peter has given them the confirmation of his apostolic authority, as presenting his ideas, his mode of thinking?

This hypothesis of Peter's having employed a writer in the composition of the second Epistle, explains, moreover, another remark which it has been usual to urge against its apostolic origin. If the Epistle of Jude be compared with the second chapter of this Epistle, there will appear a very striking similarity between them. This, as in the case of the Gospels, is so great that it is impossible it should have arisen accidentally. An impartial comparison of the two makes it extremely probable that Jude is the original, and was employed in the Epistle of Peter. Now this hardly seems suitable for the apostle Peter, considering him as the author of the Epistle. He, the pillar of the church, should have been the original writer, though it would not have been strange that Jude, who held a far lower rank, should make use of his production. On the supposition, however, that Peter employed an individual to write for him, the latter might have made

use of Jude's Epistle, and what would be totally unsuitable for an apostle would not be at all strange in his assistant. If it be said that, as Peter must have known the use which was made of Jude, the circumstance still remains very strange, we may suppose that both, Peter (with his assistant) and Jude, conferred together in regard to combating the heretics, and agreed together in certain fundamental thoughts, and that thus coincidence in details was occasioned by their common written ground-work. Still, it may not be concealed, that, after all attempts to explain these appearances, there nevertheless remains in the mind something like suspicion; and for this reason, although there are certainly not sufficient grounds for rejecting the Epistle, we cannot regard its genuineness as susceptible of proof.

There are other points of less moment, which are usually brought forward by the opponents of the Epistle. Among these is the passage 2 Pet. 3: 2, in which the writer, it is said, is distinguished from the apostles, just as in Heb. 2: 3. But, in the first place, the reading in the former passage is not perfectly certain, since several ancient versions give it the same sense as *Luther*, who translates: "that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and of the commandment of *us the apostles of our Lord and Saviour*."* But, even though we admit

* So, too, in the English version. The question alluded to in the text is, whether we should translate, *of us the apostles*, or, *of the apostles sent to us* (or *to you*, according to another reading). See the original Greek.—Tr.

that to be the correct reading, is one by which the author is distinguished from the apostles, we may explain the passage by supposing that the writer who was employed, instead of speaking in the name of the apostle, spoke in his own person. This was certainly an oversight, but not a very great one ; like that, e. g., which occasioned the Evangelists to differ from each other in respect to the number of the blind men whom our Lord healed and other points of the kind. The admission of such trifling oversights belongs properly to God's plan in regard to the Scriptures, since literal coincidence would, on the one hand, give rise to strong suspicion in regard to the veracity of the writers (as it would suggest the inference that there had been previous concert between them), and, on the other hand, there would be danger of confounding the letter with the spirit, to the disadvantage of the latter.

Of as little consequence is the reference made to 2 Pet. 3: 15, 16, where Peter says of his beloved brother Paul, whose wisdom he extols : "as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things ; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." These words, it is said, clearly suppose a collection of Pauline Epistles to have been current in the church ; but one cannot have been made earlier than the commencement of the second century, and consequently the Epistle must be regarded as a work of later origin. But this assumption, that the collection of the Pauline Epistles

was first made at so late a period, is by no means susceptible of proof. Indeed, in the fourth chapter we attempted to prove it not improbable that even Paul himself made a collection of his Epistles. At all events, no historical fact can be adduced against this hypothesis, and we must therefore consider thus much as certain, that the mention of a collection of Pauline Epistles ought not to induce us to conclude against the apostolic origin of the Epistle whose history we are investigating.

Thus is confirmed the position which we laid down above, that not one of the reasons usually adduced against the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter is a decisive one. Notwithstanding, as has been already mentioned, impartiality enjoins it upon us to allow that, after considering these reasons, there remains a feeling in the mind which does not permit us to place this Epistle in the rank of those universally-admitted. We find ourselves constrained to resort first to one expedient, then to another, in order to invalidate the arguments which make against the genuineness of the Epistle. Let us, however, cast a glance at the other side, and consider the arguments which may be adduced *in favor of* the authenticity, of the Epistle. The impression made by the genuine apostolic manner, in the first and third chapters in particular, is so heart-stirring, the severe moral tone which prevails throughout them is so forcible, that very estimable scholars have found themselves induced to regard these two chapters, or at least the first, as truly Petrine, and the second or the last two as, perhaps, merely subsequent additions to the

genuine Epistle. This hypothesis has indeed, at first view, this recommendation, that we can give proper weight to the reasons for doubt, without being obliged to regard the express statements respecting Peter personally as having been forged. But the close connection of all the chapters with each other, and the uniformity of the language and ideas throughout the Epistle is too much at variance with the supposition of an interpolation of the Epistle, to make it right that it should be admitted.

Still, we cannot but allow the great weight of the reason from which the hypothesis took its rise, viz., that it was an almost inconceivable piece of impudence for an impostor to assume the person of the apostle Peter, so as even to speak of his presence at the transfiguration on Mount Tabor, and venture to invent prophecies of our Lord to him respecting his end. (Comp. 2 Pet. 1: 14.) It is true, appeal is made, on this point, to the practice of the ancients, according to which it was not so strange and censurable, it is said, to write under another's name, as it appears to us at the present day. And it is undoubtedly true, that in the primitive times of the church writings were much more frequently forged in the name of others than at the present time. But it is a question whether this is to be referred to the custom of the times, or does not rather arise from the fact, that in the less methodical book-transactions of the ancient world it was much easier to get fictitious writings into circulation than it is at present, on account of the great publicity which

now attends such transactions. At any rate, we must say, that it was a very culpable practice, if it ever was common, to procure currency for one's literary productions by affixing a great name to them ; and every honorable man would have avoided it and written only in his own name. Suppose, however, it was less offensive than now to publish any thing under an assumed name, we must notwithstanding protest in the most earnest manner against the idea, that a man could permit himself fraudulently to appropriate such points from the life of him whose name he used as could be true only of the latter ; which must be the case in regard to this Epistle, if it was not written by Peter. Were this to be done in any case, the use of another's name would no longer be a mere form in writing, it would rather be a coarse piece of imposture, such as could not occur without a decidedly wrong intention ; and this leads us to a new and important point in the investigation of the origin of the second Epistle of Peter.

The alternative in which we are thus placed is as harsh as it could possibly be. Either the Epistle is genuine and apostolical, or it is not only spurious and forged, but was forged by a bold, shameless impostor, and such a person must have had an evil design in executing a forgery of the kind supposed. Now in the whole Epistle we do not find the slightest thing which can be regarded as erroneous or as morally bad. Its contents are entirely biblical, and truly evangelical. An elevated religious spirit animates the Epistle throughout. Is it conceivable, that a man actuated by this

spirit can be chargeable with such a deception? Or is it supposed that this spirit is itself feigned? But this idea plainly contradicts itself, for he who is bad enough to forge writings cannot entertain the design of extending a good influence by his forgery. No forgery would be necessary for such a purpose. The design must have been to defend what was unholy in principle or practice under cover of a sacred name. The only probable purpose of the forgery of the Epistle is this; that the unknown author of the production wished to combat the heretics described in the second chapter, and in order that he might do this with some effect, he wrote in the name of the apostle Peter and made use of the Epistle of Jude in doing so. But if a man who was honest (in other respects) could have been induced to enter upon such a crooked path, would he not have contented himself with placing the apostle's name in front of his Epistle? Would his conscience have permitted him to appropriate falsely from the life of the apostle such particulars as are narrated in the Epistle? This is really hard to believe, and the efforts made to preserve the genuineness of the first chapter at least, which contains these very particulars, sufficiently prove how universal is the feeling that the statements it contains cannot have been forged.

It is true the case would stand otherwise, if it were a well-founded position, that the Epistle really contains erroneous tenets. But how truly impossible it is to establish this, is very evident from the nature of the points adduced as errors. In the first place, one is

supposed to be contained in the passage, 2 Pet. 3: 5, in which it is said, that the earth was formed out of water and in water by the word of God.* It is true, there are parallels to this view of the creation of the earth in several mythical cosmogonies ; but is this circumstance a proof that the doctrine of the creation of the world out of water is false ? Does the Mosaic account of the creation, or any other passage in the Bible, contain any thing which in the slightest degree impugns it ? Or does the condition of the physical or geological sciences in our day prove that the earth certainly came into existence in a different manner ? It will suffice, in regard to this point, to remind our readers that the formation of the earth out of water was taught by the celebrated *De Luc*, not to mention many men of less note. At the most, then, it can only be said that in the passage referred to, there is something openly and definitely stated which is not found thus stated in any other book of the Bible ; though it is impossible to deny that the Mosaic account of the creation (“ The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”) is susceptible of such an interpretation, as to convey the idea which is more plainly declared in 2 Pet. 3: 5. Thus there is no ground for talking about an error in this passage of the Epistle. The same remarks may be made respecting another position,

* Our English version gives a somewhat different sense to this passage ; but probably the translation above conveys nearly, if not exactly, its true signification.—TR.

that the doctrine (also presented in the third chapter of the second Epistle of Peter) concerning the destruction of the world by fire is erroneous. For it can by no means be shown in regard to this second idea, that it contradicts the common statement of the Bible, or contains anything incorrect. Indeed, there are other passages likewise, that contain an intimation, at least, of the same thing which is here openly stated. (Comp. Isa. 51: 6. Zeph. 3: 8.) And so far are the similar mythical accounts in other religions from arguing anything wrong in this idea, that we should rather consider the coincidence of the mythical accounts with the biblical doctrine as a confirmation of the real verity of the former.

If, therefore, we put together all which has been said of the second Epistle of Peter, thus much is certainly clear, that the circumstances which are calculated to excite suspicion respecting the Epistle, are by no means sufficient to constitute a formal proof of their spuriousness. True, the suspicious points cannot be so perfectly obviated, that every doubt will disappear. Some uncertainty will remain in the mind. Still the positive arguments in behalf of its genuineness so far allay these doubts that it is possible to obtain a satisfactory *subjective* conviction of the genuineness of the Epistle. But a proof of its genuineness which shall be of perfect validity and be generally acknowledged can no more be attained than such a proof of its spuriousness; and therefore there will always be something dubious in the position of this Epistle. The ancient Fathers

of the church endeavored to express this uncertainty by the term *Antilegomena*, and later teachers in the evangelical church by the designation *Deutero-canonical writings*, among which this Epistle is reckoned. Attempts to remove all the obscurity which envelopes the facts in regard to this Epistle will probably always prove vain, from the want of historical accounts respecting the use and diffusion of it in primitive times.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE EPISTLES OF JAMES AND JUDE.

IN investigating the Epistles of James and Jude, the question is, as in the case of the Epistle to the Hebrews, not so much whether they are genuine or spurious, as who was their author. This may seem strange, inasmuch as the authors of both of them mention themselves in the salutations, which is not the case as to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed, Jude, for the purpose of designating himself still more definitely, adds the circumstance that he was the brother of James. But, as both these names were very common among the Jews and the relations between the persons of this name mentioned in the New Testament are quite involved, it is a very difficult inquiry, what James and what Jude were the authors of the Epistles which we are considering. Now, if it should be probable on investigation, that the authors of the two Epistles were not apostles (i. e. among the number of the twelve disciples), then will arise a second inquiry, what we are to think of the canonical authority of the Epistles?

The first question is, how many persons of the name of *James* and *Jude* are mentioned in the Scriptures or by ancient christian writers? From the catalogues of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10: 2 seq. ; Mark 3: 13 seq. ;

Luke 6: 12 seq. ; Acts 1: 13 seq.) we perceive that two individuals among them were named James. The first was a brother of the Evangelist John, a son of Zebedee and Salome ; this James is often mentioned in the evangelical history. His brother, Peter, and himself were of all the apostles the most intimate with our Lord. He was present at the transfiguration and at our Lord's agony in the garden of Gethsemane. According to Acts 12: 2, Herod killed him with the sword a few years after our Lord's ascension. As, therefore, this James disappeared from the scene of events very early, he does not cause much difficulty in the investigation. The second James is termed the son of Alphæus, and of this apostle we have so uncertain accounts, that it is difficult to determine much respecting him.

As there were two individuals of the name of James among the twelve, so there were two Judes. One, the betrayer of our Lord, of course is not concerned in this investigation. He cannot be confounded with any one else ; especially as he had the surname Iscariot from his birth-place Carioth. The second Jude, it would seem, bore many names ; for while Luke (in the Gospel as well as in the Acts), calls him Jude the son of James, Matthew and Mark call him sometimes Thaddeus and sometimes Lebbeus. It was not at all uncommon among the Jews for one man to bear several names ; and therefore we may admit the validity of the prevalent opinion that Lebbeus or Thaddeus and Jude the son of James are the same individuals.

In John 14: 22, a second Jude among the twelve is expressly distinguished from Jude (Judas) the traitor, who is termed Iscariot; and hence the name Jude may have been the one by which the former was most commonly designated.

Now did we know with perfect certainty that the authors of the Epistles under consideration were of the number of the twelve, it would be easy to fix upon the individuals; James, the son of Alphaeus, must have written the Epistle of James, and Jude, the son of James, that of Jude. But as Jude (v. 1) calls himself the brother of James, he must either mean another man of this name known to his readers, or we must suppose the term *brother* to signify step-brother or cousin, as indeed the word is often used in Hebrew. For the opinion of some, that in the catalogues of the apostles) see Luke's Gospel and his Acts of the Apostles) Jude is not called the son but the brother of James, must be totally rejected, because, though it is true that sometimes the word *brother* is to be supplied for the Genitive following a proper name, this is only the case when it is clear from the connection what is to be supplied. In the apostolic catalogue, however, *son* is every where else to be supplied for the Genitive; and hence it is incredible that in the case of Jude alone *brother* must be added.

But that the authors of these two Epistles of James and Jude were among the number of the twelve is very uncertain (indeed, as we shall show hereafter, improbable), and on that account we have still to determine

the difficult question, what persons of these names wrote the Epistles? The following reasons show the uncertainty of the idea that the authors of the Epistles were apostles. In the first place the Fathers of the church speak of another James, the brother of our Lord, and first bishop of Jerusalem, and another Jude, likewise the brother of our Lord, as the authors of the Epistles; and moreover, these were disputed by many and reckoned among the Antilegomena, clearly for this reason alone, that it was supposed perfectly correct to regard them as not apostolical. Thus, in the opinion of the Fathers there were beside the two James's and Judes among the twelve, two other persons of these names, called *brothers of our Lord*. These are mentioned in the passage Matt. 13:55, with two other brothers of our Lord, Simon and Joses, and with sisters of his whose names are not given. They are also mentioned in the later history of the apostolic age (Acts 15:13 seq. Galat. 1:19. 2:19), particularly James, who is designated with Peter and John as a pillar of the church. According to the Fathers of the church he was the first bishop of Jerusalem, and the description which the New Testament gives of his position and operations perfectly accords with this statement. According to the account of the Jewish writer, *Josephus*, and a very ancient christian historian named *Hegesippus*, this James, the brother of our Lord, died a martyr's death at Jerusalem shortly before its destruction. He possessed such authority and such reputation for piety among the Jews, that, according to Jose-

phus, the destruction of the city was a punishment from heaven for the execution of this just man. James was succeeded in the bishopric of Jerusalem by another brother of our Lord, viz. *Simon* (Matth. 13: 55), who, as well as the third brother *Jude*, lived till the reign of the Emperor Trajan, i. e. to the end of the first century after Christ. According to the account of Hegesippus, Simon also died a martyr's death, like his brother ; of the manner of Jude's end nothing definite is known. Although, however, we find these brethren of our Lord laboring with ardent christian zeal after the resurrection of the Saviour, still in the life-time of our Lord they did not believe on him. This we are told by John expressly (7: 5), and therefore we do not observe these brethren of Jesus among the disciples until *after* his resurrection from the dead. (Acts 1: 13.) Probably the vision with which (according to 1 Cor. 15: 7,) James was favored, was the means of convincing them all of the divine dignity of our Lord, which hitherto, perhaps on the very account of their close relationship to him by blood, they had been unable to credit. It is true, the expression, *brothers of our Lord*, is not to be understood as meaning what the words strictly signify ; for Mary, the mother of our Lord, appears not to have had any other children. The passages Matth. 1: 25. Luke 2: 7, in which, Jesus is called the *first-born* son of Mary, prove nothing to the contrary, since, if no more children follow, the only son is also the first-born. If the statements of Scripture respecting these brethren of our Lord be put together,

it cannot be doubted, that the children of the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, are intended by the expression. This sister of Mary was likewise named Mary, and was the wife of a certain Cleophas. She stood with the mother of Jesus beneath the cross of our Lord, as did also Mary Magdalene. (John 19: 25.) This same Mary is called in the parallel passage of Mark (15: 40) the mother of James the Less and of Joses. Here, then, are named two of the persons who in Matth. 13: 55, are termed brothers of our Lord. Nothing, therefore, is more natural, as it nowhere appears that Mary had any other children, than to suppose that these so-called brethren of our Lord were his cousins, the sons of his mother's sister. As it is probable that Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus, died at an early period, (for he is not mentioned after the journey to Jerusalem in the twelfth year of Jesus' age,) Mary perhaps went to live with her sister, and thus Jesus grew up with the sons of the latter, which may have been the reason why it was so difficult for them to give credit to his divine authority. It was very common in the Hebrew idiom to term cousins *brothers*. Hence, in Gen. 13: 8, Abraham and Lot, who were cousins, are termed brothers. If we were to take the word *brother* in its literal sense, and regard the four brothers of our Lord mentioned in Matth. 13: 55 as own children of Mary the mother of Jesus, we should have to suppose the extraordinary circumstance that the two mothers of the same name had also children named alike. Now, as we nowhere find mention, first

of our Lord's brethren, and then of his cousins, but the same relations are always referred to, this supposition cannot be admitted. The same may be said of another supposition, according to which two of these so-called brethren of our Lord, viz. Jude and James, were of the number of the twelve. For it is said that the Hebrew name which lies at the basis of the Greek one, Cleophas, (abbreviated Klopas,) viz. *Chalpai*, may also in Greek become Alpheus. Thus James the son of Alpheus would be equivalent to James the son of Cleophas. Now, it is true, that on the score of philology nothing can be reasonably objected against this supposition ; but, its validity is overthrown by the fact that one and the same writer (viz. Luke), presents both forms. Although the name could be differently expressed in Greek, at least the same writer would always have followed the same mode. Moreover, as we have already remarked, it is inadmissible to supply the word *brother*, instead of *son*, after the name Jude. Lastly, it is a decisive circumstance, that in John 7:5 it is most expressly stated that the brethren of Jesus did not believe on him. It is therefore impossible that they should have been of the number of the twelve. Consequently, the New Testament mentions, besides the James, son of Zebedee, who was early executed, two other persons of this name, first the apostle, who was a son of Alpheus, and next the brother of our Lord, the first bishop of Jerusalem. Thus, too, the New Testament mentions, besides the apostle Jude, who was the son of a certain James of whom we know

nothing, another Jude who, likewise, was a brother of our Lord and lived to a late period (till the time of Trajan), in Palestine. That these two brothers of our Lord, and not the apostles, were the authors of our Epistles, has been already intimated and will now be more fully shown.

Of great importance, and indeed almost decisive by itself, is the circumstance, that the Fathers of the church refer the Epistle of *James* to the brother of our Lord of that name; and, too, the Fathers who lived in that very region which was the scene of the labors of this celebrated bishop of Jerusalem, viz. the East. Here they might and must have had the most exact accounts respecting this distinguished man, and information as to his writings must have spread itself very readily from Jerusalem to the neighboring countries of Syria and Egypt. This historical testimony is confirmed very strongly by the great agreement which exists between the contents of the Epistle and the communications which are made by ancient Fathers of the church, and particularly *Hegesippus*, in regard to the peculiar habits of James. According to the account of this writer James distinguished himself by forms of piety which were very like those inculcated in the Old Testament. He fasted and prayed a great deal, so that, as *Hegesippus* relates, probably with some exaggeration, his knees had become callous. According to the New Testament, too, (Comp. Acts xv. with Gal. 1: 2,) James, the brother of our Lord, appears to have been the head of the Jewish Christians. He, there-

fore, undoubtedly observed the Mosaic law even after he became a Christian, and endeavored to obtain the sanctity enjoined in the Old Testament. That, however, this endeavor* was not a narrow-minded one, as among the Ebionites, but a liberal one, as among the Nazarenes, is plainly shown by the narrative in the Acts, according to which he did not, along with the obstinate Judaizers, desire to impose the observance of the law upon the Gentiles, but only adhered to it himself, as a pious practice of his fathers. Still his whole disposition leaned somewhat to the side of the law, and this is clearly exhibited in the Epistle.

The same is true of *Jude* likewise. His very designation of himself as *brother of James* can leave no doubt that he desired to represent himself as the brother of that James who was so celebrated, the first bishop of Jerusalem. He does not call himself an apostle, any more than James. Both term themselves merely servants of Jesus Christ, neglecting from modest humility to make any mention of their relationship by blood to our Lord. We have no statements on the part of the early Fathers of the church in regard to the author of the Epistle of Jude. The later Fathers, e. g. *Jerome*, call him an apostle, but they did not for that reason mean a different Jude; only, as might very easily happen considering the confused accounts we have of these men, they sometimes placed Jude the

* The original reads *Schreiben*, which I take to be clearly a mistake for *Streben*, and translate accordingly.—Tr.

brother of our Lord among the number of the twelve, contrary to John 7: 5.

Another as important reason for believing that James the brother of our Lord, and not the apostle James, was regarded as the author of the Epistle is, the circumstance that it was reckoned among the *Antilegomena*. Doubts did indeed arise, but not till a pretty late day. *Clement* of Rome, *Hermas*, and *Irenaeus* make use of the Epistle without scruple. *Origen* first, then *Eusebius*, mention doubts. Now as before the time of Jerome there is no trace of the Epistle's having been regarded as forged in James' name, the ground of doubt can have been no other than that it was questionable whether an Epistle of any one not an apostle could claim admission into the canon. Jerome observes, that certain individuals believed the Epistle of James to have been forged by some one in his name. This opinion, however, is entirely devoid of probability, because in such case the author would not have neglected to ascribe the dignity of apostle to the James whom he wished to be regarded as the writer of the Epistle, that it might be more sure of admission into the canon. Those persons, therefore, of whom *Jerome* speaks, and who undoubtedly resided in the West, probably entertained doctrinal scruples respecting the Epistle. In the West, and particularly, in Rome, the centre of the Western churches, special regard was felt for Paul and his doctrines. Now the second chapter of the Epistle of James was supposed to contain erroneous notions in contrariety to Paul, because, as was thought, it incul-

cated justification by works instead of by faith. This passage even misled Luther into a rejection of the Epistle of James. In his preface to it he says : "This James does nothing but urge his readers to the law and to works, and his manner is so confused that I imagine he was some pious man who had gathered a few sayings from the disciples of the apostles, and put them down upon paper. . . . Hence the Epistle of James is but a *strawy* Epistle ; it has by no means an evangelical tone."

In more recent times, however, it has been proved, by very thorough and impartial investigations, that this harsh judgment of *Luther* is certainly unfounded, together with the apprehensions of the ancient Fathers mentioned by *Jerome*.

James only opposed misconstructions and perversions of Paul's real doctrine, not the great apostle of the Gentiles himself. The two great teachers of the church are essentially one in sentiment ; only they had reference to different heresies, and thus their language wears a different aspect. In the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, Paul presents the doctrine of faith, and justification thereby, in opposition to the reliance which the Jews placed on works. James, on the other hand, opposes a dead, imaginary faith, which, without any renovating influence over the heart and mind, lulls a man into the sleep of sin, instead of making him active in works of love. If we thus consider the language of the two apostles with reference to the positions which they respectively opposed, we shall per-

ceive the most perfect unity between these two teachers of the church, notwithstanding all their freedom and peculiarity of manner. Though they taught the same doctrines, their point of view was different. Paul had a predominant leaning towards faith, not meaning by any means, however, to deny that it must bear good works as its fruit; James directed his attention more to the fruit, without, however, disparaging the root of faith from which alone they could spring.*

Thus, leaving wholly out of view the influence of doctrinal ideas, the discrepancy between the ancient Fathers of the church was only whether the Epistle, as proceeding from the brother of our Lord, who was not an apostle, should or should not be admitted into the canon. The East, in general, maintained that it should, because James had exerted so much influence in that region; the Christians of the West were less favorable to it. In reality, then, the question was not in regard to the genuineness of the Epistle, but in regard to the rank of James, whether or not he should be placed on a level with the apostles in respect to the abundance and power of the Spirit poured out upon him, so that a writing of his might be received into the canon as a norm of faith and practice for all future generations of Christians; a question which we will soon consider further.

* See more complete discussions of the supposed discrepancy between Paul and James on the subject of faith and works, in the *Biblical Repository*, Vol. III. p. 189, and Vol. IV. p. 683.—Tr.

In regard to this second point, likewise, the case is the same with the Epistle of *Jude* as with that of James; except that in the accounts concerning this Epistle given by ancient Fathers we do not find the slightest evidence that the Epistle was ever regarded as the production of an impostor who forged it in Jude's name. Such a supposition respecting this Epistle is extremely improbable. In such case, would an impostor have contented himself with designating Jude as the "brother of James?" Would he not at least have expressly called him an apostle of our Lord, in order to gain a place for the Epistle in the canon? When we are told, therefore, of opposition to the Epistle, which caused it to be placed among the Antilegomena, we must refer it all to a refusal to accord to the author of the Epistle, who was not an apostle, sufficient consideration to procure its admission into the canon. Thus in regard to the Epistle of Jude, likewise, the point in question is, not the genuineness of the Epistle, but only the personal standing of the author, which by some of the Fathers of the church was considered equal to that of an apostle, and by others inferior. The investigation of this question, then, what we are to think of the admission of two productions of writers who were not apostles into the canon of the New Testament, remains for the conclusion of this chapter.

Now, whether it be said, that the church has forsaken its principle of admitting no writing into the canon which was not either written by an apostle or composed under his supervision and authority, in admitting the

Epistles of James and Jude ; or that they indeed adhered to their principle, but erred in regarding James and Jude, the brethren of our Lord, to whom they correctly ascribed the Epistles, as apostles, and therefore admitting their Epistles into the canon—either way, it would seem as though we of the present day were entitled to charge antiquity with mistake respecting these Epistles. As to the Epistle of Jude the case certainly seems to be as we have here stated it. It was written by one who was not an apostle, by a man of whose acts and character we know nothing further ; a fact which appears to sustain the scruples of many of the ancients in regard to its being canonical. Moreover, it contains nothing which is not also found in the second Epistle of Peter, so that the church could dispense with it without suffering the slightest loss. We might therefore be disposed to consider this Epistle as a deuterocanonical production, which was received into the canon only at a late period on the ground that it was more advisable to preserve every writing of the days of the apostles than to reject any thing which might be of apostolic origin. It is not to be forgotten, however, that the use of Jude's Epistle in the second Epistle of Peter must be considered as apostolic confirmation of the former, if the latter be acknowledged genuine. Both productions, therefore, stand or fall together. The impossibility, however, of proving beyond doubt the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter, will not permit the friends of these Epistles to entertain any thing more than a subjective conviction in regard to the authority of Jude.

The case is different, however, with the Epistle of James. For this remarkable man appears, both according to the New Testament and according to the Fathers of the church, to have occupied a very influential position. It is true he was not of the number of the twelve; but the fact that our Lord appeared to him separately as he did to Peter (1 Cor. 15: 7), indicates his consequence; as does also the circumstance that he was elected bishop of Jerusalem, and especially his relation to the Jewish Christians, of whom James seems to have been the real head. Hence in Gal. 2: 9, this man, with Peter and John, is called a pillar of the church, and Josephus represents the consideration in which he was held among the Jews to have been so great, that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was looked upon as a judgment for his death. Although, therefore, James was no apostle, and moreover, no one of the twelve, so far as we know, afforded his confirmation to the Epistle, still the church might well have considered itself entitled to insert the production of so influential a man in the canon. It may be said, indeed, that James was in a precisely parallel situation to that of Paul (who too was not of the number of the twelve, and still enjoyed apostolic dignity); except that in regard to the appearance of our Lord which was vouchsafed to James and the commissions which were entrusted to him we have not such particular information as is furnished us by the Acts respecting his appearance to Paul. Yet, passing by this, we cannot but declare, that an apostolic confirmation of a par-

ticular book, such as we suppose in the case of Mark and Luke, according to the testimony of history, is nothing compared with the testimony which we have from Paul's own mouth respecting James. He is designated, along with Peter and John, as a pillar of the whole church of God upon earth, and thus, though not one of the twelve, still placed entirely on a level with the proper apostles; and hence no objection at all can be made to the reception of the Epistle by the church. She has not, in receiving it, deviated at all from her principles; indeed, she has thereby rather applied them in their real spirit, not rigorously restricting the idea of *apostolical* estimation to the number of the twelve, but referring it to the fulness and power of the spirit exhibited in the life. This, however, as appears from the Epistle itself, and from history, was possessed in its utmost potency by James, as well as Paul, on which account the Epistle of the former richly merits a place among the canonical books.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

THE sublime book which concludes the New Testament, the Revelation of St. John, (*ὁ θεολόγος*,) with its wonderful images and visions, has met with a more extraordinary fate than any other writing of the New Testament. The impressive and absorbing nature of the contents of the book has seldom permitted any one to examine it with cool impartiality, and while some have become the enthusiastic advocates of the book, others have appeared as its most violent opponents, not only rejecting the work as not apostolical, or as forged, but even reviling it as the production of an heretical spirit. Thus it has happened, that, while no production of the New Testament can exhibit more and stronger historical evidence of its genuineness and apostolic authority than the Revelation, none has met with more antagonists; and, indeed, many of its antagonists are men who have merited much gratitude from the church for their struggles in behalf of the truth. Among these is Luther, who shows himself a determined opponent of John's Revelation. He says, in his preface to it:

“There are various and abundant reasons why I regard this book as neither apostolical nor prophetic.

First and foremost ; the apostles do not make use of visions, but prophesy in clear and plain language (as do Peter, Paul, and Christ also, in the Gospel) ; for it is becoming the apostolic office to speak plainly and without figure or vision, respecting Christ and his acts. —Moreover, it seems to me far too arrogant for him to enjoin it upon his readers to regard this his own work as of more importance than any other sacred book, and to threaten that if any one shall take aught away from it, God will take away from him his part in the book of life (Rev. 22: 19). Besides, even were it a blessed thing to believe what is contained in it, no man knows what that is. The book is believed in (and is really just the same to us) as though we had it not ; and many more valuable books exist for us to believe in. But let every man think of it as his spirit prompts him. My spirit cannot adapt itself to the production, and this is reason enough for me why I should not esteem it very highly.”

From this strong language of the great reformer it is sufficiently evident how repulsive the contents of the Revelation were to him. As he termed the Epistle of James a *strawy* Epistle, because it seemed to him to contradict Paul’s doctrine in regard to faith, so he rejected the Revelation, because the imagery of the book was unintelligible to him. This was obscure to him from the fact that he could not thoroughly apprehend the doctrine of God’s kingdom upon earth, which is exhibited in the Revelation, and forms the proper centre of every thing contained in it.

The same point has at all times in the church operated very powerfully upon the judgments of learned men in regard to the Revelation; and therefore we must, before any particular examination of this production, make some general observations on the propriety of permitting doctrinal views generally, and the doctrine of God's kingdom upon earth particularly, to have an influence on criticism.

In recent times, critical investigations of the sacred books have pretty generally proceeded on the principle, that doctrinal views ought not to exert any influence upon inquiries respecting the genuineness of the Scriptures. It has been easy to lay down this principle, because generally* the binding authority of Sacred Writ has been denied, and writers have not felt it incumbent on them to admit as an object of faith every thing that was stated in genuine apostolic writings. Indeed, to many an investigator it has been very gratifying, that in genuine writings of the apostles things should occur which to him seemed evident errors; since in such case it became more easy to prove that the apostles, even, had stated many things erroneously, and that therefore what was true in their productions should be separated from what was false. With Luther, however, and all the other old theologians the case was different. They acknowledged the Scriptures as binding on their faith, and therefore could by no means wholly exclude doctrinal considerations. For, were a book proved to be apostolical by all possible historical and

* That is, in Germany.—Tr.

internal arguments, and yet it plainly subverted the Gospel and preached a different Christ from the true historical Son of God and man, no faithful teacher of the church of Christ should receive and use any such production, notwithstanding all the evidence in its favor, any more than listen to an angel from heaven, who should bring another Gospel (Gal. 1: 8). Such was Luther's position; and in this view we may respect and honor his opposition to the Epistle of James and the Revelation of John. His only error in this, in itself commendable, endeavor boldly to distinguish what was anti-christian was, that he decided too rashly and hastily, and thus did not investigate with sufficient thoroughness, and, on the ground of appearances merely, pronounced that to be not biblical which in reality was so. That this was the case in regard to his judgment concerning the discrepancy between James and Paul, is at the present day universally admitted. In regard to the Revelation, however, many still think that he judged correctly, although, in my opinion, he erred here as much as in relation to the Epistle of James.

We cannot say, therefore, that doctrinal considerations are not of the least consequence in critical investigations; though certainly we must not permit them to have an improper influence, so as to disturb the historical investigation, nor too hastily make an objective rule of our present subjective views, but endeavor to investigate more thoroughly what is at the moment obscure and inexplicable. Such an endeavor will often educe a modification of our views, and we may find

that what seemed erroneous contains profound and sublime truth.

In particular, this would undoubtedly be the case with many, if they could determine to consider more closely the doctrine respecting God's kingdom upon earth, which has always been the greatest cause of offence in the Revelation. True, it is not to be denied, that the history of the fortune of this doctrine is by no means calculated to favor it ; for every thing which human ignorance and human malice have been able to devise appears to have concentrated itself in the misapprehensions of this doctrine. If, however, pains be taken to separate these misapprehensions and perversions from the doctrine itself, and we are impartial enough to consider, that often very profound truths, which take a mighty hold of the human mind, are most exposed to abuse, and may become most dangerous, and that hardly any other religion has been misused to such abominable purposes as the Christian religion itself, and yet that it is not on that account the less true or the less divine, he will easily attain the proper fundamental idea of the doctrine of God's kingdom upon earth ; which is so simple, that we cannot understand how its truth could ever be doubted, until we remember the farragos of nonsense which have been propounded under its sanction. This simple radical idea is merely, that as, in regard to an individual man, God, by the Saviour, redeems not merely a particular part of him, his spirit alone, his soul alone, or his body alone, but the *whole* man, his body, soul, and spirit, so the re-

deeming power of Christ has for its object the deliverance of the entire human race, and of the creation in general from the yoke of sin. As, therefore, the end of salvation for the individual is the glorification of his nature, the end of all things in the universe on the same principle is the glorification of the universe. Proceeding from this fundamental idea, the Revelation teaches in sublime imagery, agreeing perfectly with the statements of our Lord and the apostles, (which are less formal and rather take the doctrine for granted, and thus are more incidental,) that a period will come in which not only, as had already been the case, the spirit of Jesus Christ should prevail in secret and guide men's minds, but should also gain the victory externally and found a kingdom of peace and righteousness upon earth. Now, that with the arrival of this reign of peace there will be connected, on the one hand, the appearance of Jesus Christ and a resurrection of many saints and pious men, and, on the other, a previous mighty struggle on the part of evil,—does indeed follow very naturally from the fundamental idea, and the supposed development of good and evil; but these points are only incidental. The principal idea is the perfect return of the supremacy of good, the restoration of the lost paradise to an earth which has been laid waste by sin. Millions desire this most earnestly, hope and pray for it even, without ever imagining that it is the very doctrine which they think themselves bound to oppose, or at least unable to admit without deviating from correct belief. Even the excellent reformers had but an im-

perfect notion of this doctrine, though it is as simple as it is sublime ; and for this reason, in a great measure, that they saw around them senseless fanatics who dishonored the Gospel and caused unspeakable injury by the grossest misconstructions and perversions of this doctrine.

It would not have been worth while, with our present purpose, to say even the little we have said on this subject, were there not so many well-meaning men, of real piety, who, notwithstanding the most striking historical proof, can never prevail upon themselves to admit the Revelation to be a genuine apostolic production, and therefore entitled to a place in the canon, and thus to become a rule of faith ; because they feel that then they must, in consequence, admit the reign of God upon earth into their circle of belief, which they suppose they neither can nor ought to do. May such be led to a thorough investigation of this idea and of all the passages of Scripture which relate thereto, that the acknowledgment of evangelical truth in this respect may be promoted and its fulfilment be rendered nearer at hand !

In passing now to the consideration of the historical evidence in favor of the genuineness of the Revelation, we must again call to mind the latter days of the life of John the Evangelist. He lived, as we know with certainty, longer than any one of the other apostles, that is, as late as to the end of the first century. The scene of his successful labors at the close of his life was the city of Ephesus, in the vicinity of which were situ-

ated all those cities to which were directed the seven Epistles contained in the first chapters of the Revelation. Ephesus, moreover, was one of the great centres of business in the Roman empire, and was much frequented by Christians from all countries.

It must, therefore, be admitted, that it was easy for the Ephesian church particularly, and indeed for the whole ancient church, to arrive at the highest degree of certainty in regard to the writings of John. In particular, there could be no uncertainty whether John had composed so peculiar, so very remarkable, a production as the Revelation. We must therefore admit, that if among the Fathers of the church in that region we met with even uncertainty in regard to its author, it would be a very suspicious circumstance; and, on the other hand, unanimity in their conviction of the genuineness of the book must be a very decisive testimony in its favor. Now we meet with this last to a surprising degree. First, we have the testimony of *Papias*, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, in behalf of the book. This man was personally acquainted with several of the apostles, and among them with the Evangelist John. His testimony is therefore of the greatest consequence. It is true an attempt has been made to invalidate it, on the ground that only a late writer named *Andreas*, attributes to Papias any knowledge of the Revelation; but careful consideration of the principal passage respecting Papias in Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. III. 39.), which certainly ought to be thus examined, will show that Eusebius has given a wrong

representation concerning Papias in more than one respect, and everything is in favor of the supposition, that Papias was acquainted with all John's writings. Eusebius is one of those Fathers of the church who were very much prejudiced against the doctrine concerning the millenium, and it is on this account that he so strongly opposes Papias. Since this ancient bishop was a principal supporter of that doctrine, his testimony may on that account appear partial; and yet his close relation to John cannot have permitted him, notwithstanding all his predilection for this doctrine, to attribute to that writer a production which was not his. Justin Martyr, too, along with Papias, testifies in favor of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse. He was, indeed, born in Palestine, but he taught in Ephesus, and there had opportunity to learn how things really were. Now, this Father expressly declares the Revelation to have been written by the Evangelist John, one of the twelve. So, too, *Melito*, bishop of Sardis, one of the cities to which the Epistles in the Revelation are addressed. We cannot but presume that such a man would know who was the author of a production which contained an Epistle to the church over which he presided.

The same is true of *Polycarp*, the celebrated bishop of Smyrna, to which church, likewise, an apocalyptic Epistle is addressed. This man was an immediate disciple of the Evangelist John. Polycarp's pupil, *Irenæus*, who removed from Asia Minor to the South of France, and, as has been already observed, became

bishop of Lyons, gives us an account of Polycarp's relation to John, and makes use of the Revelation throughout his writings, without mentioning even the slightest opposition to it. It is also employed as really apostolical by the Western Fathers, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Hippolytus*, etc., without any mention of a doubt as to its canonical authority. Still, it may be said, none of these were either learned or critical; they found in the Revelation their favorite doctrine in regard to the kingdom of God upon earth, and therefore they readily received the book as a production of John's. In decided opposition to such remarks, we adduce the Alexandrian Fathers, *Clement* and *Origen*. These were not only the most learned men of the day and the best skilled in criticism, but, in particular, were *opponents of the doctrine of the Millenium*; yet neither had any idea that the Revelation of John was not composed by the Evangelist of that name. They chose to get rid of the odious contents of the book by a forced interpretation, rather than by opposing the tradition of the whole church. A stronger combination of historical evidence in favor of the apostolic origin of the book is, in fact, hardly conceivable! The weight of this evidence is augmented by what we know respecting those who doubted the genuineness of the book. Of this number was a presbyter of the Roman church, whose name was *Gaius*. This man made it a set purpose to oppose the doctrine of the millenium; and because, the defenders of it naturally appealed first of all to the Revelation, he declared it spurious, without, however,

presenting any historical or critical reasons for doing so. In order to degrade the Revelation, it was even referred by him to a heretic, *Cerinthus*, who was said to have written it in John's name. But in this he clearly evinced that he was carried away by his feelings, for no one can by any means attribute the Revelation to an intentional deceiver, for this reason, that it would have been one object with such a man to denote with precision the person of the Evangelist, so as to cause the work to be regarded as his. This, however, has not been done, and thus we are not permitted to take any view in opposition to it, except it be that another John, and not the Evangelist, composed it. This opinion was first stated and defended in a formal manner by the learned *Dionysius*, bishop of Alexandria, a disciple of Origen. But, as this man lived at so late a period that authentic oral tradition was no longer within his reach, no more stress is to be laid upon his doubts than upon the learned objections of more modern days. We come therefore to this result : *All historical tradition is unanimous in behalf of John's composition of the Revelation.*

Now, in order to invalidate this decided testimony of antiquity, very striking arguments ought to be adduced ; but observe what are the reasons which prevail upon modern investigators to deny that the Evangelist John was the author of the Revelation, and then judge whether they are strong enough to countervail such testimony. In enumerating these reasons, I follow a distinguished scholar of the present day, whom I very

much esteem and love as my former instructor, although I differ entirely from his views. I do indeed believe him to be in general very impartial and unprejudiced ; but nevertheless I think him to be influenced in his judgment of the Revelation by the force of prejudices which were largely imbibed by the church and have been widely diffused.*

In the first place, it is urged by this learned man that John never mentions himself in the Gospel and Epistles as the author of these writings ; would he act differently then in the Apocalypse ? It is true, he says only that this circumstance is worthy of attention ; but as it stands as one of his arguments, it seems to have been regarded as of considerable importance. Of what consequence, however, is such a difference in practice, since all we can say is, simply, that the author chose in this case to employ a different form from his usual one ? What writer is there who does not act as he pleases in regard to such points ?

In the second place, the variation from his other writings in point of language is adduced as an argument. The fact is indisputable. The language of the Gospel is pure Greek, smooth, and accurate ; that of the Revelation, on the contrary, is harsh, rugged, full of inaccuracies of expression, and real grammatical mistakes. But it is not true that all difference in phraseology indicates different writers. Compare, e. g., the earliest writings of Göthe, Schiller, Herder, with

* I mean Prof. De Wette, in his "Einleit. ins neue Testament" (Introd. to the N. Testament).

the latest productions of the same authors. Especially, take an author who attempts to write in a foreign language ; must not his first essays be of a totally different character from his later ones ? He has not complete mastery of the language ; he struggles not only with the sense, but with the form ; and this must necessarily make the phraseology even of the most practised intellect somewhat cumbrous. This is exactly the case with John's Revelation. It was his earliest production in the Greek language, occasioned by the fearful occurrences during Nero's persecution. These cast the sympathizing mind of the beloved disciple of Jesus into deep meditation, during which the spirit of prophecy showed him the future fortunes of the church and its final conquest over Judaism and heathenism. It was, therefore, composed some twenty years earlier than the Gospel and Epistles seem to have been written, and in a language which to John, a native of Palestine, must have been a foreign one. Now, the Revelation appears exactly like the production of a man, who had not yet acquired the requisite skill in the Greek language, and as its internal characteristics, likewise, show that it was written in the early part of John's life, before Jerusalem was destroyed, it is in fact impossible to see, how one can ascribe importance to this circumstance of the difference of style, in opposition to the tradition that the Evangelist John was the author of the production ; the rather as there is undeniably very much in the language which bears

close affinity to those writings that are admitted to be John's.

The same may be said of the *third* observation, that the style of the Revelation is in the following respect very unlike that which we find in the Gospel and Epistles, viz. that the former exhibits a lively creative fancy, while, in the latter, quiet, deep feeling predominates. In regard to this remark, which likewise is correct, we are to consider, first, that the same individual in different stages of mental development will make use of different styles of expression. The earlier works of the same writer are accordingly more ardent, more imaginative than his later. Moreover, the imagery in the Revelation is not by any means to be regarded as the arbitrary production of a rich fancy, but rather as actual appearances to John's mind from the operation of the divine Spirit within him. I admit that John would not have been selected as the medium of these communications of the Spirit, had there not been in his whole organization a special adaptation for such impressions ; but still, susceptibility to them is not the same as positive productive fancy. Finally, it is not to be forgotten in this view, that John's other writings are of a more historical or else purely didactic nature ; while, on the other hand, the Revelation is a prophetic production. It would therefore be totally unnatural that the same style should be observable in the Apocalypse as in John's other writings.

The only remaining point alleged in confirmation of the difference between the Revelation and other

writings of John is, that they exhibit a totally different *doctrinal aspect*. In particular, stress is laid on this circumstance, that in the Gospel nothing at all is found of what forms the main topic of the Apocalypse, viz : the expectation of a visible coming of our Lord and the establishment of his kingdom upon earth. Moreover, all that is said in the Revelation respecting good and bad angels is of a more Jewish cast, we are told, than we should expect John's views to have been, from examining his other writings. It would appear, that, if this be really so, it is a reason of some weight against the genuineness of the book ; for we cannot suppose the apostles to have altered their doctrinal views, and, plainly, difference in the character of the writings could not affect the doctrine, as both in historical and prophetical productions there must exist the same fundamental views on the part of the writer. Now, the remark is indisputably correct, but the true reason of the fact has been misapprehended. For, first, the same difference which is exhibited between the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse, also appears, on comparison, between the Gospel of John and the first three Gospels. These latter, like the Revelation, present many doctrines and views agreeable to the Jews, particularly the visible coming of our Lord to assume his kingdom upon earth ; while nothing of all this is touched upon by the Gospel of John, notwithstanding there was ample occasion for doing so. It does not thence follow, however, that either John or the others err in representing the discourses of Jesus

Christ, since the same person *may* have spoken sometimes spiritually, as in John's discourses, and sometimes in a Judaizing manner, as according to the other Evangelists. The correct solution of this difficulty is to be sought solely in the *special purpose* of the Gospel of John, with which the first Epistle stands in such intimate connection that it is not strange it should partake of the same character. The two other Epistles are too short to be here taken into consideration. For above (in the third chapter in speaking of the Gospel of John,) it was observed, that this Evangelist had a particular class of persons in view in his work, viz. men similar to the later Gnostics, and who in certain views coincided with them perfectly. In particular, they, like the Gnostics, speculated on divine things in a peculiar manner, and sought to idealize the real facts in the history of Jesus, more than the true apostolic doctrine permitted. These men, among whom were many very sensible and well-meaning persons, were those whom John had particularly in view in the composition of his Gospel. With apostolic wisdom he avoided in this work every thing which could offend the prejudices of these persons. Many Jewish ideas, which had a very good and genuine foundation, and, according to the first Gospels, were expressed by the Saviour himself, he kept back, becoming in a manner a Gnostic to the Gnostics, without doing the least injury, however, to the cause of truth. He depicted Christianity, therefore, to their minds, just as they could most easily comprehend it, convinced that when once

they had seized this idea they would gradually learn to understand it thoroughly.

If, now, we adhere steadfastly to this point of view, it will appear perfectly intelligible, how the same John who wrote thus in the Gospel, should appear to express himself so differently in the Revelation, in the composition of which no such reference existed ; though still he was always governed by the same doctrinal views at every period of his life. And thus we must declare, that no one of these reasons is calculated to disturb us in regard to the correctness and truth of the tradition of the first centuries after Christ. If the repugnance which is felt towards the contents of the Apocalypse be only conquered, men will soon cease to rate so highly the reasons which are adduced against its apostolic origin, and to think so little of the importance of the unanimous tradition of antiquity. And that this may soon happen is the more to be wished, as the progressive development of the Church makes the Revelation more and more important in testing what is now occurring among Christians, and what awaits them in the immediate future !

CONCLUSION.

HAVING thus passed through the entire series of the writings of the N. Test., taking notice of the critical questions in regard to them, we will now, for the sake of convenience, present a compendious view of the *results* at which we have arrived.

We find then most, and the most important, of the writings in the Canon of the N. T. so unanimously acknowledged in ancient times, and so universally made use of as apostolical in later days, that there cannot be the least doubt in regard to them. They are on this account denominated *Homologoumena*, universally acknowledged writings, and form the main sources of the doctrine and the history of the Christian church. Among these *Homologoumena*, as is stated by *Eusebius* so early as the commencement of the fourth century, were the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the thirteen Pauline Epistles, the first Epistle of Peter, and the first of John. If we attend only to the voice of Christian antiquity, as *Eusebius* correctly observes, the Apocalypse also does in reality belong among the *Homologoumena*. But the fortune of this book has been so peculiar, that some have not even been willing to class it among the *Antilegomena*, but have ranked it with the writings which are of a profane

character and are to be utterly rejected. Eusebius was therefore in great perplexity to what class he could properly assign the Revelation. As to the Epistle to the Hebrews, its author is unknown, merely ; its genuineness is not disputed. It belongs therefore to the class of the *Antilegomena* only so far as this, that its position in the canon was disputed, the relation of the author to the apostle Paul not being unanimously acknowledged in the church.

Properly, the class of the *Antilegomena* among the N. T. writings comprehends the two smaller Epistles of John, the Epistles of James and Jude, and the second Epistle of Peter. These five books were never universally acknowledged and used in the ancient church. More recent investigation has decided in favor of the first three. The two smaller Epistles of John are certainly apostolical, and from the author of the Gospel of John ; that of James was not, indeed written by one of the twelve, but by a brother of our Lord, who held such a prominent rank in the ancient church as placed him, like Paul, fully on a level with the Apostles. As to the two writings last in the list, however, it appears justly somewhat doubtful whether they are productions of the days of the apostles. The Epistle of Jude is, indeed, certainly genuine, but as certainly not apostolical, and, as history attributes to this brother of our Lord no very prominent station or agency, the Epistle seems not properly to belong to the canon. It can be supported only by the second Epistle of Peter, which is not itself certainly of apostolical

origin. For, in regard to the latter, a consideration of the circumstances makes it impossible to establish its genuineness objectively on valid grounds, although it may be made subjectively probable.

These results of the most careful critical investigation of the New Testament are very satisfactory. For, if we could wish that the genuineness and canonical character of the Antilegomena might be established by as valid arguments as we can adduce in behalf of the Homologoumena, still it must be admitted that those books upon which some suspicion rests are the very books, of all the New Testament writings, with which we can most easily dispense. The chief and best of these writings are the very ones whose genuineness and apostolic authority are certified as strongly as possible.

If, now, we inquire into the relation between the *external* historical genuineness of the books of the New Testament and their *internal* efficacy and determinate power over the faith and life of the individual and of the whole community of Christians, it is certainly undeniable, that the former by itself decides nothing in favor of the latter ; but still, on account of the circumstances of the church, demonstration of such genuineness is by no means unimportant or indifferent. It is clear that we may regard the writings of another religious system, the Zend-Avesta of the Parsees, or the Koran of the Mahometans, as genuine, and as having proceeded from the immediate circle of adherents which the founder of that system of religion possessed, without thereby attributing to it any internal efficacy and determining

power over the heart and life. But it cannot be said that a conviction of the genuineness of the apostolic origin of the writings of the New Testament, likewise, is a matter of indifference. It is rather of great consequence in its connection with the church, i. e. the great community founded by our Saviour and actuated and sustained by his Spirit. You may prove the genuineness of the writings of the New Testament to him who is not within the pale of the church or under its spiritual influence, and he may even acknowledge it upon incontestible historical grounds; but, as Christ and his apostles themselves are of no consequence in relation to his internal life, this proof has no more effect upon his faith or his life, than is produced upon those of the scholar who declares the Zend-Avesta to be a genuine work of Zoroaster. Far otherwise is it with him who lives in the bosom of the Christian church. Here he cannot completely withdraw himself from the influence of the Spirit of Christ, which operates upon his heart from his earliest youth; he feels himself spiritually affected and in a manner constrained by it. It is true that sinful man very often strives against the influence of the Holy Spirit, it being troublesome to him, because it does not permit him to continue sinning so freely and peaceably as he could wish. In such case he seeks to obtain plausible grounds on which he may evade the force of the Spirit's influence. One such plausible ground is often presented by the supposition that the writings of the New Test. are spurious, whereby the extraordinary character of our Saviour, with the sublime

impression he made on the hearts of men, is encompassed with doubt, and thus its effect is diminished. To members of the church of Christ, therefore, a firm conviction that the Scriptures are genuine is of the highest consequence ; the opposite opinion, yea uncertainty merely, in regard to the character of the sacred writings, is ordinarily the natural concomitant of sin. Such a sentiment hinders the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, which manifests itself, in a manner not to be mistaken, to every simple, plain mind, on perusal of the Holy Scriptures, but exhibits its full strength only when the heart feels a quiet faith, undisturbed by any doubt. Hence the conversion of many has taken rise from their acknowledgement of the genuineness of the N. T. writings ; and moreover the apostasy of many from the truth has arisen out of the circumstance that they denied the authenticity of these books. We may therefore say, that the knowledge of the genuineness of the writings of the N. T. is of essential efficacy where the influence of the Spirit of God and a susceptibility to its operations exist in any degree. To him who has already turned aside entirely from the truth, and who resists it with an unfriendly mind, a conviction of the genuineness of these books will be of little use, unless his opposition be first broken by the power of grace. To him who is converted, born again, the sure conviction of their genuineness will always be a pleasing concomitant of grace, and will excite his gratitude ; but, as he has experienced in his heart the divine power which dwells in the Scriptures,

the testimony of the Holy Spirit will always be the proper foundation of his faith, which would support him even though he had no historical proofs in behalf of the sacred books. Persons, however, who have neither experienced a perfect change of heart and mind, nor are actuated by a positively hostile spirit, but ardently desire the former, though they are often assailed by doubts and uncertainties, will find in the firm historical foundation of Scripture something on which they may lean at first, and from which they may then be gradually led to the full knowledge of salvation. For, if it be only admitted that such a life as that which the Scriptures represent our Saviour's to have been was really spent, that such words as they communicate to us from him were really spoken, the obvious question is, Whence came such a phenomenon? What is its import to the world? to me?

But, it may here be asked, if the case is thus, how happens it that God has permitted many plausible objections to exist against the writings of the N. T., and that some cannot even be freed wholly from suspicion? Would it not have been more consistent with the purpose of the Scriptures, had all the books been supported by so numerous and so completely incontestible testimonies, that not even a doubt concerning them could ever have entered any one's mind? It may indeed seem so to short-sighted man. But his desires would not stop here, they would reach still further. He would wish to have a Bible without various readings, a biblical history free from the slightest variations,

in short, Jehovah himself embodied in the letter of the word. The living God, who is eternal wisdom and love, has not thought any thing of this kind suitable for mankind; otherwise he would undoubtedly have effected it for their benefit; and the reasons why he has not we may at least conjecture, even with our weak powers. On the one hand, it would have become easier for man to confound the word and the Spirit dwelling in it with the letter; for, even as the case now is, this mistake has not been entirely avoided, from the want of spirituality in many men. On the other hand, the guilt of many persons would have been augmented, since they now have at least plausible reasons for their opposition to the truth, but in the other case would have had no such extenuation, and still would have retained their hostility to God's word. We may therefore declare, that the character of Scripture, in this respect likewise, corresponds most perfectly with the necessities of human nature, as well as with the designs of God, notwithstanding all its apparent imperfections and deficiencies.

The observations we have here made in conclusion are, moreover, such as are best suited to present the correct view concerning the peculiar character of the Old Testament in the light of criticism. For this portion of God's word has so few historical evidences in its favor, excepting those comprehended within its own compass, that it is impossible to frame such an argument for the genuineness of its books as we are able to exhibit in behalf of the New Testament. This want of

evidence proceeds in part from the very great antiquity of the writings of the Old Testament, which were almost all composed before there existed any literature among the Greeks, and before the Romans were so much as known by name ; and in part, also, from the state of seclusion which the nations of the old world generally, and particularly the Jews, always maintained. The Persians, Syrians, Egyptians, knew scarce any thing of the literature of the Hebrews ; and, had they even been acquainted with it, the circumstance would have been of little advantage to us, as we have but few writings of a date anterior to the time of Christ which originated with these nations. In these few, moreover, we find hardly any mention of the Jews and their productions. Hence, in investigating the earliest writings of the Old Testament, the critic has no other resource than a careful examination of the contents of the books themselves, and a comparison of them with each other. Were this examination and comparison invariably conducted with a believing and humble disposition, not the slightest objection could be made, and we might quietly await the results of such a procedure ; but, when the minds of investigators deviate from the proper spirit and disposition, it is very evident how easily such an inquiry, which is in its nature somewhat uncertain and precarious, may lead to pernicious results. Every one will, in such a case, determine the matter according to his subjective ideas and views, without obtaining any objective grounds of judgment from investigation. If we only look at the actual state of the matter entirely aside

from the holy character of the book, we shall be convinced that such a course of investigation could hardly afford any useful result, even with the best intentions. A book is presented to us, which contains the relics of a nation's literature during a period of 1200 years. We derive all that we can know of the history, the manners, the special circumstances of this people, excepting a few points, from this book alone. Thus it is at once the *object* and the *norm* of investigation. Since, moreover, in regard to many of the writings in it we have no statement as to their author and the time of their composition, the investigation of these writings cannot but have always a character of uncertainty. If we were only familiarly acquainted with the history of a single nation in close vicinity to the Jews, and found in its literature constant reference to the Jewish writings, we might then, by drawing a parallel, communicate more stability to the criticism of the Old Testament, but we have no such advantage, and must content ourselves with individual notices, which have come down to us from the most ancient times of the nations with which the Jews came in contact. It was not till the time of Alexander the Great, about 300 years B. C., that the Jews, with their literature, became known to the Greeks, through whom we have received much important information in regard to the Old Testament. For, as the Jews, after that period, when they fell under Greek dominion, made themselves acquainted with the Greek literature, and to some extent themselves wrote in Greek, as e. g. the celebrated Jewish writers,

Josephus and Philo, so, on the other hand, the Greeks began to take an interest in the Jews and their religious institutions. From this mixture of Hebrew and Greek life proceeded the celebrated *Greek Version of the Seventy*. This, according to the account of the ancients, was executed under the Egyptian monarch *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, at the instance of the learned *Demetrius Phalereus*, about the year 270 B. C. It is true, the Old Testament was not probably translated all at once, but, at any rate, even according to the most recent opinion, the Old Testament was entirely translated into Greek when *Jesus Sirach* was composed, i. e. about the year 130 B. C. Consequently, it is placed beyond a doubt that the whole Old Testament, as we have it, existed in Palestine in the Hebrew language long before the time of Christ and his Apostles, and in a Greek version in the other countries of the Roman Empire, particularly in Egypt, where there resided so large a number of Jews and they possessed so great privileges, that they had even built a Temple in the city of *Leontopolis* in close imitation of that at Jerusalem. In Egypt, the collection of the Apocryphal books likewise, which were confessedly written in Greek, was inserted in the canon of the Old Testament, which was spread abroad by the version of the seventy interpreters, and from this version they were introduced into the Latin church-version, (the so called *Vulgate*,) thus obtaining the same authority as the writings of the Old Testament, which authority they possess at the present day in the Catholic church. As, however, they are

not *expressly* cited in the New Testament,* and are wholly wanting in the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament, Luther rightly separated them from the rest, but appended them to the books of the Old Testament, as “*Writings not to be equally esteemed with Holy Writ, but still profitable and excellent for perusal.*” The Reformed church, however, has gone still further, and dis severed them entirely from the collection of sacred books, in order to prevent them from being confounded with the inspired word. Hence arose this great evil, that the historical connection between the Old and New Testament, which is so well exhibited in the narrative writings of the Apocrypha, was totally sundered ; and this connection is by no means a matter of indifference to believers, because it is only through it that God’s providence towards his people can be regarded in the light of an united whole. Hence it would seem best to retain the apocryphal writings along with the Sacred Scriptures, designating, indeed, the distinction between them and the canonical books.

Thus much, then, according to these statements, we know certainly from historical testimony, that the Old Testament, as we now have it, existed more than a century before Christ. It is true the learned would be gratified to know a great deal more respecting the for-

* Allusions to them are pointed out by *Stier* in his “*Andeutungen für Glaubwürdige Schrifterklärung,*” (or Hints towards the proper interpretation of the Scriptures,) p. 486, seq.

mation of the canon of the Old Testament, respecting the authors of the individual writings, etc. But, in view merely of the relation of the Old Testament to the faith of the present day, the knowledge that the Old Testament was in a complete collected form before the time of Christ is sufficient to afford us a firm conviction of the genuineness and importance of its books. Now, that the existing Old Testament was generally diffused and in use among the Jews, is attested by the Jewish writers of the apostolic times, who employed the Greek language in their writings. *Philo*, in Egypt, and *Josephus*, in Palestine, make use of the Old Testament throughout their works, thereby confirming the custom of the New Testament, which also every where refers to the Old Testament. The manner in which the Old Testament is cited by the New, and the definite declarations in regard to the former which are contained in the latter, are decisive as to the faith of Christians of the present day. These afford us more than the mere assurance that the books of the Old Testament are authentic; this might be admitted, without the slightest acknowledgment of the value of the writings, since the most wretched and even hurtful productions may be perfectly genuine. They declare in the most precise manner the *divine character* of these books, which of course presupposes their genuineness, for it is very evident that no writings could be divine which originated in deceit and imposture.

In the first place, we find in the New Testament citations from almost all the writings of the Old Testa-

ment.* The principal books, as, e. g., the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Prophet Isaiah, are cited very often, and even those less important are referred to here and there in the New Testament. A very few are entirely neglected;† of this number, in particular, is Solomon's Song, which is nowhere cited in all the New Testament. This circumstance is certainly not accidental. Perhaps it is not too much to conclude, that the books of the Old Testament which are not at all mentioned in the New should be regarded very much as the so-called deuterocanonical books of the New Testament; though the circumstance that they are not cited in the New Testament can be nowise objected against their genuineness, any more than the position of a New Testament book among the Antilegomena can be considered as a proof of its spuriousness. These non-cited books of the Old Testament, with the exception of the three minor Prophets, probably present something like a *transition* to the apocryphal books. At all events, the fact that these books are nowhere mentioned in the New Testament should inculcate upon us *caution in making use of them*.

* The O. T. is expressly cited in the New more than four hundred times, and in a much larger number of places there are allusions to the O. T.

† The Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song, as also the minor Prophets, Obadiah, Nahum and Zephaniah. It is most proper, however, to consider the twelve Prophets as *one work*; and then the fact that these three are not cited loses its force. But in regard to other books of the O. T. the circumstance that they are not cited is not unimportant.

Of more importance than the citations, are such passages of the New Testament as contain decisive declarations respecting the Old Testament as a whole. These occur particularly in the discourses of our Lord himself. Jesus calls the law (Matt. 5: 17 seq.) eternal, imperishable. Heaven and earth, he says, shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away, till all be fulfilled. In a similar manner, in Luke 24: 44, prophecy concerning Christ is represented as something running through the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, and as necessary to be fulfilled. In Luke 16: 17, also, all created things, (heaven and earth,) it is said, will sooner and more easily pass away than the Law and the Prophets. Thus a lofty divine character is clearly claimed in behalf of the Old Testament. It may, indeed, be observed on the contrary, that, in the passages referred to, allusion is made, not to the whole Old Testament, but only to particular books, the Mosaic law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. But, first, it is to be noticed, that the expression, Law, or Law and Prophets, stands frequently for the whole Old Testament, just as Gospel stands for the whole New Testament. Moreover, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, was the usual division of the books of the Old Testament among the Jews. The first part of the Hebrew Old Testament comprehends the five books of Moses, the second part falls into two subdivisions, first the historical writings, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and, secondly, the three

larger and 12 minor Prophets. In the third part, (which in Luke 24: 44 is termed *Psalms*, from the principal book which it contains,) belong moreover, besides the Psalms, the book of Job, the writings of Solomon, the book of Daniel, and some later historical books, and, lastly, the book of Chronicles. But, entirely aside from this Jewish division of the Old Testament, the connection of these passages with the citations clearly shows, that they are intended to refer to the whole Old Testament. The citations in the New Testament from the Old are not adduced as mere confirmation, drawn from human productions of great value, but as irrefragable proofs from sacred books. This power of proof could have belonged to them only from the fact that they were not bare compositions of human wisdom, but those of men who were moved by the Holy Ghost. (Compare 2 Pet. 1: 20, 21.) Now, as citations from all the principal writings of the Old Testament occur in the New, the general declarations we have mentioned must of course refer to all the writings of the Old Testament, so as to attribute to them *a common character*, viz. that of a divine origin.

To this it is to be added, that throughout scripture there runs the doctrine of a deep, essential connection between the Old and New Testaments. As the Old Testament is always pointing onward to the New, so the latter is always pointing backward to the Old, as its necessary precedent. Consequently, both alike bear the character of a divine Revelation; only, this Revelation manifests itself in a gradual development. In the Old Testament it appears in its commencement, as

the seed of the subsequent plant ; in the New Testament the living plant itself is exhibited. On account of this relation, there cannot be any thing in the Old Testament specifically different from what is to be found in the New Testament ; only, the form of presenting the same thing is at one time more or less plain and direct than at another.

These declarations of the New Testament in regard to the Old are, to Christians, not mere private assertions of wise, good, and pious men, such as many in our day are in the habit of supposing Jesus and his apostles to have been ; they exhibit, rather, authentic information respecting the real character of the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament. Christ, as the Son of the living God, as absolute truth itself, who alone knew the Father, and as the source of all real revelation from him, can have made such declarations concerning the writings of the Old Testament only with the strictest sincerity, (as is the case with every thing he did or said,) and must have designed that they should be a rule to his church, since his whole life on earth had but one single aim, that of developing the heavenly and eternal to the created world. Thus, had Jesus attributed the character of eternity to a production to which it by no means belonged, he would have counteracted his own sole purpose. The same is true of the apostles, who, in that respect to which our attention is now directed, are to be considered as upon a level with Christ himself, they being pure organs of the mind of Christ ; though, in themselves considered, they were but sinful men, and desired to be so regarded. Under the influence of the Holy

Spirit they acknowledged the eternal character of the Old Testament ; and their declarations on this point are not (any more than those of our Lord himself,) mere subjective, private statements, they are rather authentic accounts respecting the character of this part of Holy Writ. In considering the force of the apostolic declarations concerning the authority of the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, we are to regard, not merely the citations of individual passages from it, or general statements respecting its authors, such as their being at one time represented as moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1: 21), and at another Holy Scripture being called instruction unto salvation (2 Tim. 3: 15.), which, as the New Testament was not then collected, can refer only to the Old ; but we are especially to observe the manner in which the citations are adduced from the Old Testament. This is most remarkable in the Epistle to the Hebrews, although similar passages also occur in the Gospels and other books of the New Testament. In this remarkable Epistle, God or the Holy Ghost is constantly named as the speaker, in the passages which are adduced from the Old Testament ; and this not only in regard to those which are accompanied in the Old Testament by the expression, “ God said,” but also to those in which some man speaks,—for instance, David, as author of a Psalm. Herein is clearly exhibited the view of the author in relation to the Old Testament and the writers of it. He considered that God was, by his Holy Spirit, the living agent and speaker in them all, so that, consequently, the Holy Scriptures were to him *purely a work of God*, although brought forward by men. That the

genuineness of these writings was equally certain to him, follows of course, because that which is divine, as has been before remarked, can never appear in the form of a forgery.

It is true, however, that such a proof in behalf of the Old Testament is valid only for him who has become convinced, by living experience, of the truth of God in Christ and the infallibility of the Spirit which actuated his disciples. Where this truth and infallibility are either flatly denied, or even merely doubted, the observations we have made may be of no weight. For such persons we cannot frame an argument in behalf of the Old Testament which shall be valid against all objections. As to us who live according to Christ, and to whom the power of his Spirit is accessible, every thing must radiate from the centre of the New Testament scenes, viz. the Saviour himself. The conviction of his eternal power and Godhead establishes the Old Testament retrospectively, and also establishes the New Testament prospectively, by the promise of his Spirit, which should bring all those things which he had said to his disciples to their remembrance. On this conviction the assurance of the genuineness and divinity of Scripture forever rests, and much more securely, than upon any external historical proofs; for it wholly takes away the possibility of an attack in any quarter on the part of human sophistry, and leaves assurance safe in the unassailable sanctuary of our interior life.

END.







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